THE DISCURSIVE POSITIONING OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN FOUR UK PRIMARY CLASSROOMS

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DEDICATION

To my beloved father Yiannis
To my beloved mother Lemonia
To my Yiorgos, my beloved

Abstract

The debate about inclusion of children with special educational needs (SEN) in mainstream education in the UK partly revolves around what makes the classroom environment inclusive. Social and local conceptualisations of government guidelines, as well as specific school agendas, currently influence a range of practices. This study aims to identify ways in which multimodal discourses and particular pedagogic approaches shape the positioning and identification of students with SEN in four primary school classrooms. It investigates whether the practical discursive positioning of students with SEN in these four classrooms can deliver inclusion. The study considers the views and behaviour of primary school students with and without SEN, primary school teachers and teaching assistants (TAs) in one Steiner and two mainstream schools. Drawing on a multimodal approach to discourse analysis which aims to account for the complex relationships between symbolic and non-verbal modes of classroom signification, the study explores ways in which meaning is produced in classrooms and the ways in which children's modes of communication, as well as teachers' practices, are discursively constructed. Four classrooms are compared on the basis of teaching observations, interviews, transcription of dialogues, and analysis of classroom organisation and decoration. It appears that the mainstream primary classrooms, which are characterised by stronger classification and framing and greater degrees of teacher-centred pedagogic discourse, establish strict boundaries around knowledge construction which influence the access to understanding and social positioning of students with SEN. Within these mainstream classrooms, there are barriers to full social and academic inclusion. By contrast, in the Steiner classroom, the inclusion of students with SEN is more effective, due to weaker boundaries around the content of constructed knowledge, more student-centred approaches and a higher degree of symmetrical interaction between teacher and students who actively participate in the production of knowledge. Based on this limited sample, it is suggested that the diverse needs of SEN students do not tend to be supported effectively by the practices of mainstream schools. A shift to more student-centred approaches is necessary.

Acknowledgements

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ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

CERI: Centre for Educational Research and Innovation
CSIE: Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education
DDA: Disability Discrimination Act
DfE: Department for Education
DfEE: Department for Education and Employment
DfES: Department for Education and Science
EADSNE: European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education
EBD: Emotional Behavioural Difficulties
EU: European Union
GDD: Global Developmental Delay
ICLD: Interagency Committee on Learning Disabilities
IEP: Individual Educational Plan
ILEA: Inner London Education Authority
LEA: Local Education Authority
MLD: Mild Learning Difficulty
NAHT: National Association of Head teachers
NUT: National Union of Teachers
SEN: Special Educational Needs
SENCO: Special Educational Needs Coordinator
TA: Teaching Assistant
UK: United Kingdom
UN: United Nations
UNCESCR: United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
US: United States

DEFINITIONS OF KEY CONCEPTS IN THIS THESIS

Adaptive Profile
Adjust to the level of other pupils without SEN in an inclusive class (Nunez et al., 2005:86)

Discourse
The term discourse refers to 'a particular type of language usage or to describe a particular group of texts which occurs within a particular setting' (Mills, 2004:142). Discourse involves both spoken and written language (Kress & Hodge, 1979)

External Locus of Control
'When a reinforcement is perceived by the subject as... not being entirely contingent upon his action, then, in our culture, it is typically perceived as the result of luck, chance, fate, as under the control of powerful others, or as unpredictable because of the great complexity of the forces surrounding him...we have labelled this a belief in external control.' (Rotter, 1966:1)

Fair
'it is morally wrong, in itself, to treat individuals differently without providing relevant reasons for so doing' (Barrow, 2001:236)

Helpless Profile
Having less confidence in academic abilities (Nunez et al., 2005:86)

Inclusion or Inclusive Education
'Inclusion is a process that maximizes the entitlement of all pupils to a broad, relevant and stimulating curriculum, which is delivered in the environment that will have the greatest impact on their learning.' (Education and Skills Committee, 2006: Ev 357)

The inclusion of a mainstream educational environment is also associated with the idea of effective teaching, as the ways through which teaching practices are implemented and delivered to students with SEN depend on perceptions about them, which identify them as disabled or deficient (Bartolome, 1994).

Individual Educational Plan
It refers to 'a document... to supplement the requirements of a statement of SEN and for pupils with less severe and less complex SEN not requiring a statement' (Farrell, 2001:1)

Integration
It differs from inclusion as it includes 'children with diverse abilities into the existing classes and structures within a school...to...fit in to a pre-existing model of schooling' (Loreman et al., 2005:2)

Internal Locus of Control
'If the person perceived that the event is contingent upon his own behaviour or his own relatively permanent characteristics, we have termed this a belief in internal control.' (Rotter, 1966:1)

Learned Helplessness
'...a belief that efforts are unlikely to lead to success' (Reid & Lienemann, 2006:8)

Learning Difficulty
The term refers to a child that:

a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age;
b) has a disability which either prevents or hinders him from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of his age in schools within the area of the local education authority; or
c) is under the age of five and is, or would be if special educational provision were not made for him, likely to fall within paragraph (a) and (b) when of, or over that age. (Education Act 1996, Section 312, 2)

Mainstreaming
This refer to 'the integration of children with disabilities with their peers in general education based on individual assessment' (Hocutt, 1996:79)

Resource Room
This is for 'students who receive special education and related services outside the regular classroom for at least 21% but no more than 60% of the school day.' (U.S. DfE, 1994:12)

School Action
This concerns the 'Identification, assessment and provision in the primary phase... (National Curriculum years 1 to 6)' and monitors 'progress and attainment' (Farrell, 2005:46).

School Action Plus
This deals with 'standards of attainment, progress and access' and 'assumes that the child has already been receiving an individualised programme and/or concentrated support under School Action' (Farrell, 2005:46).

Self-Contained Classes
'Provide only limited opportunities for students with disabilities to interact with nondisabled peers. ...all instruction occurs in the special setting.' (Wesson & Keefe, 1995:158)

Self-Esteem
'the desire to have confidence in oneself...respect and prestige from others' (Maslow, 1943, cited in Anderson, 2004:10)

Special Educational Needs

In England and Wales, according to the Education Act 1996, a child has SEN '...if he has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him' (section 312).

'All children who have developmental difficulties that affect: their learning; their behavioural, emotional and social development; their communication; and their ability to care for themselves and gain independence,' (Lindsay, 2007:3)

Withdrawal Session

'withdrawal from the classroom for individual work' (Thomas et al., 1998:146)

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CHAPTER 5

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of the research. The key issue investigated.

The purpose of this study is to identify factors contributing to the ways in which students with SEN position themselves and are positioned in two mainstream and one Steiner primary classrooms. I investigated how far the practical elements that impact upon positioning in actual classrooms can deliver inclusion. I questioned *whether inclusion may not just be an abstract political ideal/ requirement, which schools can't, or don't know how to deliver?* The theme of this thesis derives from my previous work as a therapist in a special school in Greece for children and adults with severe and profound levels of intellectual impairment. During my engagement with people with disabilities from 2001 to 2007, I was involved in a variety of activities for their academic and social improvement, i.e. Social Communication, Self-Care, and Functional Academic Skills. My academic background in Psychology and Clinical Linguistics stimulated my interest in supporting the emotional and intellectual needs of people with language and communication disorders. Throughout my contact with children and adults, I realised how difficult it was for them to carry out activities that most of us routinely perform. In such moments, I wondered what life would be like without being able to use language effectively. Children's difficulties with language acted as a barrier to their interactions, play, thinking and learning.

During my employment, I engaged in private sessions with children with dyslexia; I applied special tests for assessing their level of intelligence and strengths and weaknesses in socio-emotional development. I was responsible for drawing conclusions about the data and for writing reports on the children's performance in each section of the test. Soon, I found this aspect of my work more appealing and wanted to understand why children with learning difficulties often get bullied (Moore, 2009; Norwich & Kelly, 2004; Nabuzoka, 2000), have poor academic performance and poor social skills (Westwood, 2011; Mercer & Pullen, 2008; Martines, 2007) and the implications this has for their socio-emotional development as adults;

> For some children the experience of being continually bullied by peers can be extremely stressful. It is now widely accepted that experience of severe stress can alter a person's emotional state, producing states of anxiety and depression. (Rigby, 1999:102)

The claim that increased numbers of students with no learning disabilities are being bullied by students with learning disabilities also interested me. Students with learning disabilities may feel the need to dominate their peers through bullying as a counterbalance to their poor academic performance (Nabuzoka, 2003). My interaction with children with SEN, their parents and teachers in various educational contexts was enlightening and fruitful for constructing my own perspective of children's social and emotional needs. This led me to wonder about how teachers and peers think about these children and what kind of relations they develop with them. The concept of inclusion came first to my attention when I was discussing with parents their children's difficulties in socialising with their peers at school. When children with SEN are isolated and excluded by their peers, both inside and outside

the classroom, they cannot develop socially or cognitively and can become victims of exclusionary behaviour and academic deficiency. The immediate effect is that they have low self esteem and the long term effect is that they might struggle later on with their social lives (Rubin et al., 1994). These children are most at risk of bullying from their peers but, within the classroom, their behaviour and social position might negatively influence teachers' behaviour towards them (Besag, 1989). If teachers ignore these children or focus on their disruptive behaviour, then they may overlook the circumstances for it and not intervene in ways that could prevent or respond to problems.

Sullivan (1998) explains that when peer groups are already established at school, it is the dominant children who arrange peer groupings and decide what is and is not acceptable. This type of peer grouping can set the framework for who is included or excluded and children with SEN can gradually move down the pecking order and become socially isolated. This process also gives the message to less powerful children that they need to support the dominant group's decisions of acceptance or rejection for fear that they too will be rejected. On the other hand, teachers are not always able to support children in learning the necessary social skills to develop positive self worth and become less vulnerable to bullying. This sometimes can be seen in an opposite dynamic when the academically able are downgraded and socially isolated by a dominant peer group with SEN.

I remember a boy with dyslexia I met while carrying out my fieldwork in a Greek primary school to explore the difficulties dyslexic children had in executing specific geometrical figures as part of my postgraduate studies in Clinical Linguistic Research. This boy was 11 years old with poor self perception and academic performance. He avoided participating in activities with other children in the classroom, possibly to isolate and protect himself. Other children picked on him when the teacher was not watching and his vulnerability to peers' teasing made him an easy target for bullying. He seemed to avoid showing positive attention-seeking skills or disruptive behaviour to obtain the teacher's attention. He preferred to maintain a low profile, which isolated him both from his peers and his teacher. The behaviour of this child engaged my interest and I wanted to know more about the anomaly of his social isolation in a mainstream school which was actually aiming to promote the idea of the inclusion of children with disabilities.

Inclusion as a concept is about all learners and removing barriers to participation and learning. The focus is on the learner and meeting learners' needs, rather than the earlier concept of integration in education, whereby those with physical or learning difficulties were expected to change or adapt and so become ready for mainstream education. Inclusion as conceived and practised at grassroots level is of necessity a complex phenomenon as individual needs differ, and multiple contradictions emerge. One fundamental question became central to this project: *under what conditions can SEN children be successfully included in mainstream classes?*

To develop a holistic view about the effects of inclusion on the academic and social well-being of both students with and without SEN in mainstream primary classrooms, I searched the international literature, starting with four electronic databases, the Google Scholar, ERIC, PsychInfo, and Swetswise. I researched the terms *SEN*, *inclusion*, *mainstream education* in combination with words like, *debate on inclusion* and *effects of inclusive*

education. I found most studies concerned with inclusion and inclusive education were small-scale, qualitative studies. Although there were inconsistencies in the ways in which SEN students were described in these studies, I explored further mild to moderate cases of students with learning, behavioural and emotional difficulties as these seemed to offer some basis upon which to develop my own work. Studies about the effects of inclusive education tended to consider both the academic and emotional development of students with and without SEN in mainstream primary education.

Some studies about the inclusion of pupils with SEN in mainstream education aimed to identify the most appropriate context for their educational development (e.g.Harrower,1999; Farrell,2000) while other studies related to the severity of the students' difficulties (e.g. Stainback & Stainback, 1999). From my investigation I became aware of the debate about whether full inclusion (McGregor, 1994) or separate education, was the best solution for children with SEN (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1994). Proponents of separate education claimed that there were minimal benefits for students with SEN, either academically or socially (Dyson & Millward, 2000), when the percentage of students with SEN in a mainstream class exceeded 12% of the total number of students (Booth & Ainscow, 2002; Schwartz, 2005).

Based on the plethora of studies on inclusion and through my focus on the goals of inclusion as an educational philosophy (Cottrell, 2007), the questions I wanted to investigate multiplied. The terms and information that emerged from these studies showed how society thinks of students with SEN. The language used to describe and label students with SEN influences society's actions and behaviour towards them. What seemed to be missing was any critical examination of the students' perspectives. I wanted to listen to their voices as well, so I took a more holistic *social constructionist approach* (see Chapter 4) to inclusion and to SEN to address what seem to be gaps in knowledge or what was taken for granted. This gap suggests the need for

> Asking questions about the things that we take for granted about the human state that we call learning disability, about the way that we construct knowledge about learning disability and about how disablement is caused by social practices. It is not simply about asking questions, it is about asking questions in new ways. (Nunkoosing, 2011: 4)

Specifically, the study aims to address: ***How students with SEN are positioned and identified by teachers and peers in mainstream primary classes and how they position themselves in relation to their peers?*** I investigated this question avoiding the *taken for granted* assumptions about the biological origin of disability, focussing instead on the discursive elements that impact upon positioning in actual classrooms that claim to deliver inclusion. The aim was not to situate the problem in the nature of students with SEN but to find out why and how the practices around inclusion influence their positioning. I aimed to identify ways in which children are constructed through interactions with teachers and peers, practices, discourses, views, classrooms. The identification of children as '*students with SEN*' is a label which is socially determined and, '...some labels are so powerful that they mask all the other ways that we can see the person' (Nunkoosing, 2011: 4)

It is therefore necessary to investigate how views of students with SEN are constructed through interactions, language, attitudes, and discourses about ability and disability. The main direction of this research is to identify the forces that seem to include or exclude students with SEN in mainstream classes and make these concrete and visible, hence the following objectives:

- To identify the philosophy that underlines the idea of inclusive education and the implied opportunities for social development and wellbeing.

- To analyse the concept of inclusion as a starting point to consider whether it offers better educational opportunities for children with SEN.

- To explore the debate over the provision for and inclusion of children with special educational needs in mainstream education revolving around what makes an environment inclusive.

- To identify how specific discourses and particular pedagogic practices shape the positioning and identification of students. The discourses and the social relations produced sometimes run counter to the meaning of inclusion and raise the question of 'whether inclusion is, in reality, serving the needs of all individuals' (Hodkinson, 2010:61).

- To highlight through a comparative approach to the schools in this study, the social relations of students with SEN seen through a multi-faceted lens of teaching observation, interviews, dialogues, classroom organisation and decoration.

Chapter 1 defines the key concepts and the debates surrounding them that impact on this study. Chapter 2 presents the background to the research on inclusion and the basic models and policies of inclusion. The prerequisites for the effective implementation of inclusion and what this means in practice and the advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education which underlie the debate for inclusive education are explored.

Chapter 3 reviews the theories drawn upon for the development of the study's theoretical framework and methodology. The following theories are discussed in order to compare pedagogies:

- The multimodal theories of Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996);
- Bakhtin's theories of dialogicality, social languages, authoritative/persuasive discourse;
- Bernstein's theories of recontextualisation, classification and framing;
- Steiner's pedagogic theories.

The objectives and research questions of this study are detailed in chapter 4 with an explanation of the decision to use a combination of *qualitative methods*, and *triangulation* (Denzin, 1989), based on my *interpretivist/constructivist paradigmatic* stance for examining the study's questions and to cover in depth what contributes to ways in which students position themselves and are positioned in mainstream primary classes.

A multi-perspective, multimodal approach to inclusion is adopted because it:

- moves beyond speech and writing in order to account for the complex relationships between symbolic and non-verbal modes in producing meaning;

- offers a consistent approach for looking at a range of semiotic modes of expression and the interaction between them in learning contexts;

- contributes to a better understanding of the ways in which teachers' practices and the quality of children's communication are constructed.

Chapter 5 details the data collected in this study as they emerged from the processing of observations, field notes, interviews and visual data. The results are analysed, interpreted and discussed.

Chapter 6 summarises the study's findings in relation to the research questions and the more general debate about inclusion. Finally, Chapter 7 presents the conclusions of the study and suggestions for further research, the practical application of any knowledge resulting from the findings, and the difficulties and limitations that exist in the development of the research are also considered.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND

2. Introduction

The inclusion of children with SEN in mainstream classrooms in England is the focus of my study. Lunt and Norwich (1999) for example, claim there is no generally accepted definition of inclusive education. Campbell (2002) argues that there are different and incompatible ideas about inclusion, which make the term multifaceted and complex. These issues and their implications for SEN children are explored in this chapter, starting with some consideration of the official guidelines of the Department for Education (England and Wales) and how these are enacted according to the social or local conceptualisations that influence practice.

2.1 Inclusion – the legislative framework

In Britain, the 1974 Committee of Enquiry, known as Warnock Committee, began a review of the educational provision for children with disabilities. The resulting Warnock report (DfES, 1978) pointed out the importance of the inclusion of children with difficulties in mainstream schools and argued in favour of reducing the number of separate special schools. The report also stressed the importance of individualisation and the evaluation of educational needs in relation to psychological and environmental factors. The Warnock Report took into account factors like the severity or complexity of a child's disability, disruption of peers' education and academic failure in regular class. In 1981, the New Educational Act was passed, bringing two major changes: Local Education Authorities had responsibility for the educational provision of children with SEN and parents were given the right to participate actively in assessing the situation of their children and deciding on the best school for them (Lindsay, 2003). The Act was modified in 1988 and in 1993. In 1988 the DfE took over responsibility for educational policy, the quality of education for children with SEN and the use of financial resources. Up to then these children had been under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health (CERI, 1999). The last and most important modification in 1993 emphasised the need to place children with SEN in mainstream schools and the need for their education with appropriate programmes and the assistance of specialised teaching staff where necessary (Evans & Lunt, 2002).

UK, through EU is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, an international treaty signed on 30 March 2007 at the UN and implemented on 3 May 2008 (UN, 2012), for ensuring that 'as a human rights instrument with...social development dimension' all people with disabilities have equal rights to life and liberty. The key notions within this treaty for the purposes of this study are equality and social development. There is still the need to unpack the notions contained in the term *disability*.

2.1.1 Defining disability

According to Article 1 of the Convention, disability instantiates the social development of disability and 'persons with disabilities' are

> those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. (https://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=261)

Article 2 (UN, 2006:4) demands that persons with disabilities enjoy all aspects of life including inclusive education on an equal basis. As a signatory to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, 1960, and through the EU ratification of the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (2012) the UK government has agreed and is obliged to provide inclusive education. The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (DfES, 2001), introduced by the Labour government, indicates the wide range of concerns covered by SEN including 'emotional and/or behavioural difficulties; sensory or physical problems; communication and/or interaction difficulties.' (p. 35). An important milestone in the discussion for inclusive, non-discriminatory education in mainstream classroom was the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs (1994) ratified by 92 governments and 25 international organisations in Spain. Since then, the notion of integration has been obsolete as special needs are no longer defined only in relation to disability but to skills and cultural particularities (Gargiulo & Kilgo, 2010). *Special* is no longer associated only with a particular disability but with differences of language, culture, race and age (Gargiulo & Kilgo, 2010). In The Salamanca Statement (1994:6), *special educational needs,* refers to 'all those children and youths whose needs arise from disabilities or learning difficulties.' As there is no agreed definition, SEN could be seen as, 'an explanatory construct that is used to explain notable differences in rates of pupil progress in relation to a benchmark or point of reference'(NASUWT, 2008:9).

According to Nevoy (2003), such classifications and typologies are not neutral, but associated with models of social hierarchy, power relations and cultural values. They indicate a division between what is normal and abnormal and help to maintain social divisions between 'us' and 'them'. The perceived expertise of scientific authority can thus continue to contribute to the reproduction of conventional social structures regarding the disabled and maintain the status quo of inequality, segregation and exclusion. Definitions around special educational needs must be understood as social constructions that mean different things at different times and in different cultural settings. Within this context, 'the cultural and contextual appropriateness of educational programmes' (Miles & Singal, 2008:3) applied to students with SEN need to be explored. Before any decision about special provision, students need to be assessed and depending on their needs, a formal statement is provided. In the UK the special provision for students with SEN can involve:

- Attending special classes in mainstream schools;
- Modifying mainstream educational provision;
- Support by outside services and LEA;

- Support from the *learning support service*, whose teachers support the teaching of students with SEN and counsel main class teachers;
- Support from *special peripatetic services*, through LEAs, for students with hearing and visual problems (Meijer, 1994 :115-116)

According to IDEA (2004), children with SEN need to be educated along with their peers and not segregated. The placement of students in the appropriate school type depends on their individual needs based on teachers' and parents' evaluations. Generally, students with SEN attend lessons in mainstream classes with the support of a special teacher or in a resource room for part of the day. Students with severe SEN are placed in special classes, attending some 'inclusive events' in mainstream classes (McLoughlin, 2002). Today around the world, the tendency is to support SEN in mainstream classes with other children at all school levels. The inclusion of children with and without SEN is promoted to protect them from marginalisation, labelling and social stigmatisation (Cohen, 2002; Farran & Shonkoff, 1994). However, in the process of developing effective educational policies that benefit students with SEN in practice, it is useful to look at the effect that so-called inclusive education has on these students. Consideration of issues in the debate about whether inclusion serves the needs of students with SEN follows. There is also some discussion of the need for research to shed more light on whether or under what circumstances inclusion benefits SEN pupils.

2.2 Debates about the advantages and disadvantages of inclusion

Research into the effects of inclusion on children with and without SEN (discussed in Section 2.3), results in different views and diverse positions on the implementation of educational practice. Some studies show that inclusion contributes substantially to the psychological, social and cognitive development of students with and without SEN. This view is often adopted by teachers and parents of children with SEN. However, the opposing view claims there is only vague and imprecise data on whether inclusive education provides better education in mainstream classes for pupils with SEN. Inclusion could adversely affect students without SEN, it is claimed, as teachers spend less time with them to the benefit of children with SEN. The middle ground is represented by some researchers who believe that inclusive education can succeed, but needs redesigned curricula, appropriate training for teachers and Heads and adequate financial resources (Forlin 2004). Proponents of inclusion identify the main advantage of inclusion as giving pupils with SEN access to the mainstream curriculum and for the development of social relationships between students (Mastropier & Scruggs, 2001). School studies (Huefner, 1998) supporting inclusion identified the following advantages:

- reduction of stigma: the presence of children with SEN in mainstream education prevents categorisation and enhances their self esteem;

- interaction and collaboration of mainstream teachers with specialist staff: all teaching staff of the school aim to support all the students;

- training of teachers in special education: teachers acquire knowledge and skills to meet the needs of all students;

- benefits for pupils without SEN: interaction with and acceptance of difference, social sensitivity and supportive stance towards peers with SEN.

The implementation of inclusion does not get the full support and commitment of all those involved in it. Some believe that inclusion approaches distract attention from other possible innovations to improve the education of children with SEN. Moreover, they argue that the trend towards inclusion is based on emotional and philosophical theories rather than empirical data (Hornby, 1999). A number of researchers, teachers, parents, and children with SEN point out that:

- inclusion might conflict with the wishes of children or their parents to choose the type of school they prefer;

- the implementation of inclusion does not take into account the education of other children, as the presence of children with SEN in a mainstream class might affect the learning progress of their peers;

- mainstream and special teachers do not have the necessary collaborative skills for achieving inclusion;

- some mainstream teachers seem reluctant to support inclusive practices and have difficulty coping with students with SEN (CERI, 1999);

- financial resources and teacher education are still based on the old dualistic educational system (grammar schools/secondary moderns);

- many students show greater progress when are enrolled in special schools (CERI, 1999; Farrell, 2000).

Farrell (2000) discusses two main areas of the inclusion of students with SEN within mainstream classrooms, i.e. the socio-political ideal and the empirical evidence. The first involves the argument that all children have the right to equal access to education according to the Convention against Discrimination in Education in 1960 and the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989 and the philosophical position underlying them. However, some empirical evidence suggests that educating students with SEN in mainstream schools might not benefit them as their needs might not be fully supported; placement in special schools could be a better choice, both for them and their peers. Other concerns are that the right of parents to decide whether to place their children with SEN in a mainstream class might not best support the needs of their children and conflict with their children's rights. If special schools were eliminated, the argument goes, then parental choice would be reduced and this kind of provision for students with SEN would disappear. Of course, some parents and their children have restricted choices in any case; if, for example, Steiner education seems the most sympathetic to their children's needs, the fees may be beyond their capacity.

However, the issue of privately or publicly funded education is beyond the scope of this research. There is a lack of studies in the UK providing empirical evidence, especially from the standpoint of the children, about the effects which inclusion has on them; countering this could contribute to the planning of more efficient educational policies.

2.2.1. The cost, both financial and personal, and the effectiveness of inclusive education

No matter how promising legislation or resolutions are, in practical terms, there are questions regarding cost and effectiveness. *How effectively can the available resources and funding in mainstream schools support the needs of all children?* The large number of students with SEN taught in inclusive mainstream classes is currently disproportionate to the reduction in funding for educational provision (Barton & Tomlinson, 2012). It appears that some school districts incorporate students with SEN in regular classrooms to minimise the cost of the special education support students with more severe learning disabilities really need (Ryan & Cooper, 2012). In England, the average cost of placing students with SEN in out of authority special schools is £57,150 a year, while the cost per child in mainstream primary education is around £9,000 per year (The Telegraph, 27 September, 2008). The Audit Commission's chief executive has suggested some Local Education Authorities have not properly assessed the cost of supporting students with SEN (BBC, 2007). The *Telegraph* (14 September 2010) quoted Ofsted (2010) as saying some schools over-identify and over-label students with SEN, which can result in their underachievement and low expectations. However, by doing this, schools ensure they receive increased funding from LEAs and raise their positions in the school league tables as consideration is given to schools with a high proportion of students with SEN. Ofsted states that around 457,000 children were wrongly identified as having Special Needs in 2010. Moreover, parents from middle-class backgrounds tend to encourage their children to register as having special needs in order to receive additional tuition. According to the article, in England, 1.7 million children are registered as having learning, behavioural or physical disabilities. Less than 3% of students have formal statements, while 18.2% of students are on School Action or School Action Plus programmes, both of which are provided by schools without students being formally assessed for disability.

The Ofsted report concluded that many students would not be identified as having SEN if schools were engaged in fully inclusive and effective teaching and learning strategies that corresponded to the needs of all children. The different provision by LEAs, the differences in the identification of SEN between schools and LEAs due to a *normative* medical model and *relative* social model (NASUWT, 2008:9); a lack of resources; limited funding; bureaucratic issues and league tables discourage schools from supporting some SEN students in mainstream classes as they need to. The use of league tables as indicators of the effectiveness of schools in meeting the needs of diverse students can either 'mask considerable under-achievement or, alternatively, conceal genuine school effectiveness' (Mortimore, 1996:29). There are consequently various barriers at school level to the inclusion of SEN children in mainstream classrooms.

If mainstream schools do support SEN children and their academic achievement, what measures do they take to enhance the inclusion of students with SEN? The National Curriculum sets statutory targets according to the age and the level of development of students (Farrell, 2005). Because schools need to show high levels of attainment in school league tables, they tend to devote time and resources to students who belong in the middle attainment group. This means schools with a large number of SEN students can appear to have lower performance scores than less inclusive mainstream schools and can therefore develop lower expectations for their students with SEN (BBC, 2004). Consequently, attention tends to be focused on non-disabled students with high attainment levels (Gillborn & Youdell, 2000). Some schools hesitate to accept students with SEN if their levels of attainment are low because the institutional purpose is to increase the attainment levels of their pupils so more meet the targets the government sets for all students.

On the other hand, statutory target-setting for students with SEN might raise expectations for their potential level of achievement. Careful monitoring of standards of attainment could help students focus on specific problems with the curriculum that could be used to improve it. Focusing on academic achievement could also be seen as discriminating against students with SEN (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007). The inequality that underscores the need to legislate for inclusion is apparent when compared with exclusion in terms of race, gender, socio-economic and religious issues. Inclusive and integrated education can be seen as a system characterised by anti-discriminatory policies (Slee, 2005). However, special education could become a label attached to students from minority ethnic origins with poor performance who are subject to special provision (Harry, 2007). Various US studies have shown that students from ethnic minorities did not have adequate support from school or family and repeated years or dropped out of school (Lloyd & Stead, 2002).

Another problem is the broad range of SEN needs that specialists have to support through individual tuition. Farrell (1999) questions whether support for school subjects is an effective way of dealing with the real needs of the majority of students with SEN. There is also the problem of assessment. For an environment to be inclusive, the same practices, including assessment, should be used for disabled and non-disabled students. For example, both categories of students could work on Individual Educational Plans if teachers monitored their progress through continuous assessment rather than tests. The extent to which a school is inclusive to all students also depends on the type of curriculum it promotes. The curriculum is

> ...not just the intellectual content of the subjects taught but also the methods used to teach them, the interactions that occur among people, and the school-sponsored activities that contribute to the "life-experience". (Ryan & Cooper, 2012:123)

The National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) sees the curriculum as part of the process of inclusion.

> Inclusion is a process that maximizes the entitlement of all pupils to a broad, relevant and stimulating curriculum, which is delivered in the environment that will have the greatest impact on their learning. (Education and Skills Committee, 2006: Ev 357)

2.2.2. The Hidden Curriculum and attitudes to SEN Students

However, the formal curriculum is not the only one taught in class. While the formal curriculum is the overt teaching of school subjects and the extra curriculum refers to teaching given outside formal school hours, for example, extra Maths or English classes, and usually privately paid for, what the informal or hidden curriculum implicitly transmits are the values and rules, both academic and behavioural, of the school and society (Print, 2011:278-279). In this study, emphasis is placed on the hidden curriculum, and the verbal and non-verbal ways through which it is realised, as school values determine the ways students act and think about school and society in general. For example, the content of visual displays, the arrangement of desks, the ability grouping of students, reward/punishment systems, the pacing and sequence and type of work - competitive/collective - in a classroom convey what a school values most and how this value is communicated. The dialogues and non-verbal communication of students, i.e. gesture, gaze, body posture, of teachers and students are explored in order to understand the kind of interactions they develop and the messages these interactions convey within the hidden curriculum (Harpur et al., 2004).

The inclusion of SEN students in a mainstream educational environment requires special management of practical considerations like how effective teaching is implemented and delivered to students with SEN, an aspect of the hidden curriculum transmitted by the teacher depending on her perceptions of SEN children and what contributes to those perceptions - she may identify them as disabled or deficient or inadequate (Bartolome, 1994). The support in mainstream classrooms for students with SEN, for example, in the form of teaching assistants during lessons, leads to a different form of student categorisation so that the class teacher might have more contact with non-disabled students than with students with SEN (Blatchford et al., 2009). Thus, the teacher intentionally or unintentionally relies on a teaching assistant to manage disruptive behaviour or to instruct students with challenging performance, thus positioning them through this aspect of the hidden curriculum. Students with SEN learn to work with a particular adult and teaching style and can sometimes find it difficult to cope with a different teacher or teaching style. If schools find it challenging to support the needs of these students, they can respond by involving more teaching assistants in more lessons, thus exacerbating the problem. The demand for more support services causes some schools and LEAs financial hardship, which in turn can affect their attitude to SEN learners. LEAs sometimes monitor the funding in schools for SEN pupils to deter schools from identifying students with SEN in order to increase their budgets (Farrell, 1999). The debate around inclusion can concern the duties of teachers and teaching assistants, regarding the disproportionate amount of time spent on some students with diverse needs and the lack of appropriate training for supporting SEN in overcrowded mainstream classrooms (Miles & Singal, 2008) in order to ensure successful inclusion. MacBeath (BBC, 2006) argued

> Physically sitting in a classroom is not inclusion. Children can be excluded by sitting in a classroom that's not meeting their needs. You might call it a form of abuse, in a sense that those children are in a situation that's totally inappropriate for them.

Students need to be in an environment which cares for their diverse range of needs in practical terms and ensures that inclusion produces higher standards than segregation if their education is to be successful.

> Support inclusion so far as it is practicable. Seek practical ways of monitoring the standards achieved by pupils with SEN in ordinary schools in comparison with pupils with similar special educational needs in special schools, to ensure that inclusion in ordinary schools is delivering higher standards than those achieved in special schools. (Farrell, 1999:102)

How does inclusion operate in practice? The next section looks at studies into the effects of inclusive and special education on students with and without SEN and whether inclusion in mainstream class serves or hinders the academic and socio-emotional needs of students with SEN.

2.3 Research into the effects of inclusion on students with SEN and without SEN

As suggested at the beginning of this chapter, there are different and incompatible ideas about the issue of inclusion; Campbell (2002) illustrates this through his queries below

> 1. What is the balance between individual needs and the needs of the majority?
> 2. How far is inclusion about the active participation of children and to what extent is it about inclusion as 'done to' children?
> 3. Is inclusion a state of affairs or an on-going process?
> 4. How is inclusion related to exclusion? (p.13)

Bearing in mind Campbell's points, this section summarises some of the research into the positive and negative effects of inclusion on SEN children and those without SEN in the inclusive classroom. The conceptualisation developed from the following studies helped the analysis of my study's findings and helped to identify what various studies from different educational settings and countries reveal about the arguments for and against inclusion in respect of the academic and social integration of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms.

2.3.1 The effects of inclusion on students with SEN

In general, the findings concerning inclusive teaching seem to be positive when SEN and non-SEN students have similar abilities, interests, and issues and SEN students can

satisfactorily cope with the learning pace of the class. Students with SEN can benefit academically and emotionally when they are supported by their peers and develop friendly relationships with them in inclusive classrooms. The social benefits of inclusion could involve the elimination of stigmatisation and feelings of social isolation when SEN students experience some understanding and acceptance by teachers and peers. The inclusion of SEN children with similar levels of academic ability to the mainstream class benefits them both academically and emotionally. Inclusive policies relate to both the academic and social development of SEN (and indeed, all) children, so the research findings in Table 2.1 are presented under the headings *Academic* and *Social*, with the positive effects of inclusive education from the research literature on the left and negative ones on the right. In very general terms, SEN students can have a positive or negative experience from both the educational and social aspects of schooling, often connected to the hidden curriculum or their positioning by others.

Table 2.1 Positive and negative effects of inclusion on SEN children

The positive effects of inclusion on students with SEN		The negative effects on students with SEN	
Academic	**Social**	**Academic**	**Social**
Better academic performance than students with SEN in special schools (Baker, Wang & Walberg, 1995).	Increased *self esteem* and motivation (Myklebust, 2007; Marston, 1996; Karsten et al, 2001; Peetsma et al, 2001; Jepma, 2003; Maras & Brown, 2000; Staub & Peck, 1994)	Teachers' fears of inadequacy in handling the teaching of these children (Kataoka et al., 2004).	Low academic performance of children discouraged them and gave them feelings of failure and incompetence(e.g. Dyson, 2003; Stone, 1997)
Development of individualised, inclusive curricula and among all the children a healthy work atmosphere cultivated (Huber et al, 2001; Dyson et al, 2004).	Developed friendly relationships and received support from their peers (Baker et al, 2007; Wiener & Tardif, 2004)	Full inclusion for pupils with SEN was risky as there was inadequate consideration of these children's needs (Braaten et al., 1988; Hallahan, Keller, McKinney, Lloyd, & Bryan, 1988; Kauffman, 1989; Keogh, 1988; Megivern, 1987; Vergason & Anderegg, 1989)	Students in resource room support and in self-contained special education classes showed low self esteem, loneliness and low peer acceptance (Wiener & Tardif, 2004; Estell et al, 2008)
Teachers' adequate training and professional development affected inclusion positively (Leatherman & Niemeyer, 2005; Campbell et al, 2003).	High self-confidence (Bakker et al, 2007)	Individualised instruction for children was not implemented effectively (Hocutt ,1996)	Poor socialisation with peers and teachers in regular schools (Bakker & Bosman, 2003; Nowicky, 2003).
Improved their academic attainments with the appropriate conditions (Agran et al, 2002; Downing et al, 2004)	Better social skills (Naken & Pijl, 2002; Baker et al, 1994; Hollowood et al, 1995)	Their pace of learning in class could not keep up with the ability level of the non SEN children (Schumm & Vaughn, 1998).	Low quality of school life and lack of emotional self-control led them to little competence/self confidence and low aspirations about their future (Lackaye et al,2006)
Mainstream teacher and special teacher collaborate in order to provide better support for students' needs (LoVette, 1996)	Participation in learning (Booth et al, 2000).	Lost in the heterogeneity of the class; received inadequate special instruction for their needs, and thus showed less improvement, which ultimately hindered the progress of the rest of the class (Dyson et al., 2004; Lackaye, et al., 2006; Huber et al., 2001)	Negatively labelled and stigmatised (Wang & Reynolds, 1996).
	Not feeling isolated from society (Gibb et al., 1997; Palmer et al, 1998; Ryndak, Downing, Jacqueline & Morrison, 1995)	No meaningful contact and participation in school activities (Fuchs & Fuchs , 1994)	Less popular and socially rejected more often (Bear et al,1991; Renick & Harter, 1989)
	Encountered the reactions of others to diversity, reconciled with their individuality and learned to stand up for their rights (Cole et al, 2004)	Maintaining the balance in teaching of such a heterogeneous groups , checking their continuous progress , and achieving the high academic and social participation of all the students would be difficult (Vaughn et al, 1998)	

	Released from negative labels (Baker & Bosman, 2003; Banerji & Dailey, 1995)	Would not serve all the children as some needed parallel support in special resource rooms (Bakker & Bosman, 2003).	

The above studies show that the academic position of students with SEN is established through individualised curricular tasks and special provision (Dyson et al, 2004; Baker, Wang and Walberg, 1995), appropriateness of teachers' training and professional development to support students' needs (Campbell et al, 2003), and collaboration between mainstream and special teacher for adequate support (LoVette, 1996). However, some studies highlight the ineffectiveness of individualised instruction and special provision for students with SEN (Hoccutt, 1996) due to teachers' inadequate training in instructing heterogeneous groups of students (Lackaye et al, 2006), and due to neglect of activities for promoting the social participation and interaction of students (Vaughn et al, 1998). These studies enabled me to develop an awareness of both the negative and positive aspects of inclusion regarding the academic positioning of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms and to identify the impact of how practices are structured at organisational level, with differing results according to their appropriateness or efficiency for students with SEN.

The social position of students with SEN is established through their self-esteem (Myklebust, 2007), friendships with peers (Wiener and Tardif, 2004), self-confidence (Bakker et al, 2007), social skills (Naken & Pijl, 2002), social participation (Booth et al, 2000) and self-awareness (Cole et al, 2004). However, some studies stressing the negative aspects of including students' with SEN in mainstream classes revealed that students' isolation and special provision in special classes highlighted their poor performance, resulting in their low self-esteem, low peer acceptance and loneliness (Dyson, 2003; Wiener & Tardif, 2004). Additionally, poor socialisation with teachers and peers made them feel socially rejected and gave them low aspirations (Lackaye et al, 2006; Bakker & Bosman, 2003). These studies guided my perceptions of the overall picture of inclusion and the current views on whether inclusion, with its practices and conditions, responds effectively to the heterogeneous nature of students' SEN, the main objective of my study.

The alternative to inclusive education is separate education, so the next section summarises the findings about the positive and negative effects of separate education on students with SEN.

2.3.2 The effects of separate education on students with SEN

The placement of SEN students in special schools may occur if they have severe problems, but the research into their educational and social development suggests that special schools or classes emphasise their difference and can result in isolation, loneliness, low self-esteem and depression. However, some students with SEN, teachers and parents believe that needs are better served in an environment with special teachers and special resources to meet their diverse needs. Table 2.2 below displays the positive research findings for segregation on the left and the negative findings on the right. The table generally suggests

that there are few negative social effects as the children interact on an equal basis with class peers and are not isolated within separate education.

Table 2.2 The positive and negative effects of separate education on SEN children

The positive effects of separate education on students with SEN		The negative effects of separate education on students with SEN	
Academic	**Social**	**Academic**	**Social**
Their performance is compared with students who had similar problems and their weaknesses were less visible (Klingner et al, 1998)	Their differences from the other students often led them to isolation, loneliness and depression because they believed they were not able to be part of a social group (Pavri et al, 2000).	39% of students with LD in inclusionary classrooms for over a year did not show any desired academic attainments although a vast amount of financial and professional resources were provided (Zigmond et al, 1995)	
Negative attitude to their placement in mainstream classes as they believed that they would have to work harder and felt that they could not meet the requirements of the curriculum (Deschenes et al, 2001).	Pull out programs, i.e. instruction outside mainstream classes, believing that the continued presence of children with SEN within mainstream class caused friction between students and embarrassment to themselves (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002).	Special schools have failed to achieve the desired results in terms of the academic progress and social development of children with SEN (Kavale , 2002)	
The presence of special teachers in resource rooms who worked inside and outside the classroom with these children and the teachers of mainstream education had a substantial effect (Zigmond & Baker, 1996).		Strategies of special provision as strategies of control and exclusion adopted in cases where lack of resources restrained more inclusive approaches (Frostad & Pijl, 2007; Rogers & Thiery, 2003; Bakker & Bosman, 2003; Dyson et al, 2004; Cawley et al, 2002)	
Children who had parallel support made greater progress in reading compared to their peers who were fully included or attended special classes, as they received more systematic help from school staff (Marston, 1996)			

As inclusive education concerns the needs of all children, the next section summarises the main findings about the positive or negative effects of inclusion on students without SEN. The studies in Table 2.2 stress the distinction between the social status and social participation of students with SEN depending on the pedagogic practices and perceptions that the educational environment mediates. This was important for my study as it identified how agencies and agents through their specific discourses and practices can maintain stereotypical concepts about SEN and promote limited interactional and dialogic learning settings, consequently inhibiting students' with SEN social relations and self-esteem. What is notable is the diversity of findings about the effects of separate education on students with SEN across various educational settings in different countries, like Norway (Frostad & Pijl, 2007), Holland (Bakker & Bosman, 2003), UK (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002), US (Klingner et al., 1998).

2.3.3 The positive or negative effects of inclusion on students without SEN

Some studies (examples are in Table 2.3 below) suggest that non SEN students in inclusive mainstream classrooms also acquire a better self-image, develop caring and warm

relationships with their peers and learn to respect and embrace diversity. These studies are summarised on the left. By contrast, studies on the right illustrate the possible negative effects on non-SEN students from a less challenging curriculum affecting their academic performance and disruptive behaviour, affecting their social relations with SEN peers.

Table 2.3 The positive or negative effects of inclusion on students without SEN

The positive effects of inclusion on students without SEN		The negative effects of inclusion on students without SEN	
Academic	**Social**	**Academic**	**Social**
Most studies failed to prove that the academic progress of non-SEN students was slowed (Downing & Eichinger, 2003)	Non-SEN students increased awareness and respect for diversity, attained higher academic achievement and learnt behavioural lessons (Heumann, 1999)	The presence of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms made curriculum content less challenging for their peers and therefore, affected negatively their performance. The disruptive behaviour of students with EBD inhibited the performance of their peers (Ryan & Cooper, 2012).	If students with behavioural problems are many in mainstream classrooms, then there is negative effect on the climate and the learning context regarding students' academic and social wellbeing (Brown, 1982)
	Showed positive attitudes towards their peers with special educational needs (Nakken & Pijl, 2002)	Fear about the performance of children without SEN, as children with SEN required more time from teaching staff (Klingner et al., 1998)	
	Relief from the feeling of fear, with improvement of the self-concept and self-esteem of all children (Mahon et al, 2000; Savich, 2008)		
	Parents and teachers did not observe any imitation of problematic behaviour from students with SEN (Price, 2005)		
	Developing caring relationships with SEN peers (Peltier, 1997)		
	Developing social cognition, improving self-concept (Peck & Staub,1994)		

The examination of various studies about inclusion revealed interesting conclusions about its effect on non-SEN students' academic and social lives. These studies enabled me to appreciate how students without SEN may perceive and position their peers with SEN in the same classroom. Some studies showed that the presence of students with SEN in the same classroom with their non-SEN peers impacted on their academic life when linked with teacher inefficiency in allocating instruction equally to all students (Klingner et al, 1998). Moreover, emphasis is given to students with Emotional/Behavioural Disorder (EBD) as disruptive for the climate and learning context (Brown, 1982). Regarding the social life of non-SEN students, the presence of SEN students benefited their developing awareness and sensitivity towards diversity (Heumann, 1999; Peck & Staub, 1994). Nakken and Pijl (2002) with a meta-analysis of 14 studies from UK, Netherlands and US, stressed the conflicting effects of the academic and social inclusion of students with heterogeneous SEN, i.e., mental, sensory and motor disabilities, on their school lives. The analysis of the studies revealed a range of conclusions regarding the benefits or negative aspects of inclusion depending on the conditions and intervention programmes in regular classrooms. The inconclusiveness about the effects of inclusion on non-SEN students is seen in relation to the conditions that exist in each educational setting regarding interventions for the academic and social life of students.

Overall, the studies in Table 2.3 suggest that controversy remains about how far students with SEN in mainstream education affect their non SEN peers' academic and socio-

emotional situation (Wiener & Tardif, 2004). *How could this be otherwise, when inclusion for SEN students means individual learning targets, which makes comparisons difficult?* Inclusion as an educational practice within a regulatory framework considers the rights of children with SEN to have equal access with their non SEN peers to educational events. In addition, inclusion provides an opportunity for children to improve their social relationships, accept diversity and gain a better understanding of their capabilities. If inclusion is not applied in a meaningful way with appropriate planning, inclusion could create unhappy children, who will continue to be isolated because of their differences instead of providing educational solutions for children with SEN (Mail Online, 15 May, 2012).

2.3.4 The conditions required for inclusion

If inclusion is to remain a legitimate aim, then understanding and actualising what pupils find enjoyable and productive in the classroom can enable them to progress and experience a positive learning environment. Some of these conditions may depend on teachers' organisational skills and eagerness to work with children, the level of teacher talk, students' desire to engage in challenging tasks, and their active participation in different collaborative activities, like singing, performing, painting (Hopkins, 2008). These are areas which this research seeks to investigate through the case studies of four classes in three schools.

Individual study plans (Hocutt, 1996) involve giving priority to the identification of each individual student's needs and then allowing policymakers (and other stakeholders like teachers, parents, children, depending on school, LEA and other circumstances) to decide which type of curriculum is most useful and constructive for each student. A range of possibilities could provide equal educational opportunities to students with and without SEN. Inclusive education is the basis for the elimination of educational and social exclusion and is a medium for the abolition of discrimination against people who are different to allow them to achieve social inclusion in the broadest sense. Social inclusion develops though education.

> The social development of the child deals with the different aspects of his social nature. One is the social milieu that produces him-the home, school, neighbourhood and community and the influences which each one of these have on his attitudes and social values, interpersonal relationships and actual social behaviour...Then, there is his habitual or typical response to others...to determine what kind of social structure he, and each such child is. (Ranganathan, 2000:57)

Researchers like Vaughn (Vaughn & Schumm, 1995; Vaughn et al., 1996; Vaughn et al., 2001) found that educating children with and without SEN together effectively required:

- Appropriate training and education of teachers in mainstream education to enable them to consistently respond to the needs of all students;
- Ensuring the right of mainstream teachers to choose whether or not to teach inclusive classes;
- Encouraging teachers to develop proposals for the implementation of inclusion;

- Promoting collaborative relationships between teachers of mainstream and special education;
- Focusing on the needs of students and not on ideology;
- Tailoring the curriculum to meet the needs of all students;
- Evaluating and monitoring the progress of children and the support services and considering possible change of school;
- Ensuring the involvement and participation of parents in the educational process and decision making;
- Guaranteeing equal social and academic potential for all children;
- Taking into account the views of educational staff, parents and students about the best type of school to fit needs;
- Making available the necessary financial resources and teaching materials to support pupils with SEN.

The studies discussed in the next section aim to reveal the social/educational dichotomy that can emerge in the practice of inclusion. As my research question seeks to answer *how students with SEN are identified and positioned by teachers and peers in mainstream classes,* studies which highlight both the social and educational aspects of inclusion are included.

2.4 Inclusion in practice for students with SEN

This section looks at further implications of the inclusion debate from the standpoint of students with SEN. In England, from the 1981 Education Act, but particularly since the election of the Labour Government in 1997 and the SEN Green Paper (Department for Education and Employment, DFEE, 1997), and the Programme of Action (DFEE, 1998) there has been a reduction in the number of students with SEN registered in special schools due to a perceived desirability for students with SEN to be educated in mainstream classes, unless the severity of their disability makes this impossible. These policy decisions have meant that a child with SEN only needs to be placed in a special type of school if it is unfeasible to offer adequate and individual instruction for both academic and social progress in a mainstream school. Table 2.4 summarises diverse views about the effectiveness of inclusion for pupils with SEN.

Table 2.4 Diverse views on the inclusion of pupils with SEN

Supporting full inclusion	Unsure of the viability of inclusion	Supporting special classes/special schools
• Efficient form of education for pupils with SEN; • Taught by mainstream teachers or, in-class support by TA (Kauffman, 1993; Meyen et al., 1998)	• Need more empirical evidence about the effects of inclusion on behaviour and performance; • Not safe to uncritically accept inclusion, a relatively recent practice. (Hansen,2012; McLeskey et al.,2004)	• In mainstream classes there is no equal access to educational material in the same way their peers have; • Are pushed to the margins and stigmatised (Moore, 2007; Murray & Lawson ,2007)
• Mainstream teacher's efforts are not sufficient; • Additional support from special education staff is necessary (Elbaum, 2002).	• Parents and teachers desire parallel support in *withdrawal sessions* or *resource rooms* depending on the severity of SEN; • Evaluation needed at regular intervals (Burns, 2004:285).	• Special classes or special schools could be the school structures that respond best to the diverse needs of children with SEN; • Not inhibiting learning progress (Colley, 2007).
	• Placing students with SEN in mainstream classes with extra support or separate tasks may not amount to inclusion (Ainscow, 2000).	• The effectiveness of inclusion is based on four parameters for all pupils: • Academic performance; • Social interaction (Barton, 1997; Barton & Slee, 1999); • Attitudes of parents (Koster et al., 2009); • Teachers' attitudes and perceptions (Chamberlain et al., 2007).

The research in Table 2.4 helped me identify the basic arguments for and against inclusion, the diverse actors involved and their influence on the education of SEN children, providing me with a framework to critically review other research. In particular, Hansen (2012) and McLeskey et al. (2004) caution against the politically correct but, perhaps, uncritical acceptance of inclusion. This warning resonated with some of the responses from Burns (2004) and Erlbaum (2002) who identified the need for parallel support depending on the severity of SEN and the effectiveness of the placement of the students with SEN in mainstream settings, which seem to be inimical to some of the principles of inclusion as either the mainstream settings or special classes and schools, according to Moore (2007) and Murray and Lawson (2007), seem to pay lip service to inclusion but with little effort – for various reasons – to make it a working and feasible reality. In my study, these issues generated a wide range of questions regarding the neutral or highly supportive positions of the inclusion agenda in mainstream schools.

The studies discussed in the next section suggest how the ways in which students with SEN are identified and positioned have academic, personal and social effects. The methods employed include case studies of students and teachers, field data and statistical data from large samples of students and teachers. The studies incorporated qualitative and quantitative techniques in the analysis of observations, interviews, field data, and questionnaires. While these studies concern diverse aspects of the academic and emotional functioning of students with and without SEN and of their teachers, there is a lack of in-depth analysis, which this research seeks to remedy.

2.5 What shapes the self perceptions of children with SEN?

This section discusses the internal and external contexts which contribute to ways in which SEN children perceive themselves and perform, both academically and socially.

2.5.1 The academic performance of pupils with SEN

Table 2.5 summarises the main points of some of the studies concerning how students with SEN experience their academic performance and how the environment and other people around them motivate or inhibit their progress.

Table 2.5The academic performance of pupils with SEN

The academic performance of pupils with SEN
• pupils with SEN tend to have an *external locus of control* based on teaching staff perceptions (Mamlin et al., 2001) • less motivation for learning (Palmer et al, 1998) • lack of perseverance, thoroughness to acquire knowledge (Vaughn et al., 2001)
• exhibit unusually low academic performance • more than 70% of pupils with SEN compared to their peers without SEN have low self-esteem regarding their performance (U.S. DfE, 1999)
• develop *learned helplessness* (Kavale & Forness, 1996)
• not homogeneous perceptions about academic performance but develop an *adaptive profile* or a *helpless profile* (Nunez et al., 2005:86)
• low self-esteem and problems of adjustment (Valas,2001)
• progress based on personal reasons and encouragement by environment academic stagnation based on external motivation and discouragement (Sternberg & Lubart, 2004).

Table 2.5 summarises the main points of some of the studies concerning how students with SEN experience their academic performance and how the environment and other people around them motivate or inhibit their progress. The findings in my study tended to support the claims identified above. The whole child concept and the co-operative framework of the Steiner school fostered their strengths, while the isolation and physical and conceptual marginalisation by ability groupings in Bam and Dan's classes in Sunny Hill School and in Cas' class in Panoptical Heights, exacerbated their feelings of inferiority, incompetence and discouraged group cooperation. The feeling of learned helplessness which Kavale and Forness (1996) identified and the tendency of SEN students to adopt a helpless profile (Nunez et al., 2005) characterised the students in the classrooms in both schools as they showed less confidence in their academic abilities compared to students with the *adaptive profile to learning*, although statistically, they exhibit no difference in their perceptual abilities or in their dedication to achieving their educational objectives or continued academic improvement. This raised questions about the effectiveness of School Action and School Action Plus as responses to the heterogeneity of the students' needs. The students with SEN in my study tended to have an *external locus of control*, the belief that they were unable to change their situation; hence they had less motivation for learning and lacked the perseverance and thoroughness to acquire knowledge, compared to their non SEN peers (Vaughn et al., 2001). Although all students with SEN may face common difficulties, they shape their personal perceptions about their academic performance according to their motivation for learning and their social context. When a child is motivated to learn for

personal reasons and is encouraged by people in her environment, then she is more likely to progress academically. By contrast, when a child needs external motivation to learn and experiences being devalued in her environment, then this will result in the stagnation of her academic development (Sternberg & Lubart, 2004).

Overall, these studies showed that students with SEN tend to believe they are unable to change their situation; they have less motivation for learning and low academic performance, though not low intelligence. They either adjust to the level of other pupils without SEN in an inclusive class or have less confidence in their academic abilities, but they show little difference in their perceptual abilities or their dedication to achieving their educational objectives and continued academic improvement. Although all students with SEN may face common difficulties, they tend to progress when they are encouraged by people in their environment. Otherwise, they experience stagnation in their academic development.

2.5.1.1 The academic status of pupils with SEN

SEN students tend to identify themselves as having a low academic profile, negative self-image and poor performance in mainstream schools when they feel that they cannot respond to their needs. The poverty of the environment itself can sometimes intensify the differences between students with and without SEN. The interactions with their environment of students with SEN, peers and teachers determine how they perceive themselves and how others perceive them. This view is in line with the social constructivist perspective of the role which social interactions with the environment can play in what and how something is constructed.

Table 2.6The academic attainments of pupils with SEN (US studies)

The academic profile of pupils with SEN
• In questionnaires, students with SEN expressed confidence in academic skills in reading, writing, spelling, numeracy and organisation, as opposed to teachers' lower assessments and lower expectations. However, students compared their attainments with other students with SEN (Meltzer et al., 1998)
• A self-report survey about students with SEN, showed that their academic attainments were affected by teachers' and peers' attitudes towards their diversity (Meltzer et al.,2004)
• SEN pupils' Perceived Competence Scale questionnaire showed that they progressed in special schools while in mainstream classes, they realised their difference and felt inferior (Renick & Harter ,1989)
• Limited experience of success compared to peers in mainstream classroom. SEN pupils' poor self-perception related to internal fears and difficulties at the social level, i.e. fear of rejection by peers and teachers (Hampton & Mason, 2003)
• Grade reports, questionnaires, scales of effort, mood, hope, and an academic self-efficacy scale showed that pupils' with SEN self evaluation of academic performance was lower, with low capability to succeed when they compared themselves with mainstream peers, as they made more effort to get the same grades and devoted more time to prepare for lessons (Lackaye et al.,2006)

Festinger's (1954) theory of social comparison claims that what shapes a person's view of self is based on comparing his/her abilities with others in his/her environment. When, for example, Meltzer et al. in US (1998) explored through questionnaires SEN pupils' perceptions of their academic skills in reading, writing, spelling, numeracy and organisation and compared these perceptions with the evaluations of their teachers, they found the students with SEN considered themselves quite capable in all these skill areas, although regardless of their efforts, they felt it was difficult to achieve the same or a higher academic level as their peers without SEN. Their teachers gave lower assessments of their abilities and had lower expectations of them. According to the researchers, because pupils with SEN compared their performance with the attainment of other children with SEN, not class members without SEN, they overestimated their abilities. Meltzer et al.'s 2004 research using a self-report survey in US concluded that students with SEN's perception of their academic performance depended on the climate in an inclusive classroom. The attitude of teachers and peers towards their diversity determined the perceptions which children with SEN had of their academic performance.

Renick and Harter (1989) had similar findings using the Perceived Competence Scale questionnaire (used to assess competence in specific areas), that SEN pupils' concepts of their academic attainment depended on whether they were placed in special or mainstream schools in US. They believed that they had more success in special schools than in inclusive classes in mainstream schools. In mainstream classes, students with SEN realised their difference and felt inferior.

Hampton and Mason's study in US (2003) concluded that low evaluation of academic abilities for children with SEN stemmed from their limited experience of success compared to their peers. The researchers believed that the poor self-perception of pupils with SEN relates to internal fears and difficulties at the social level, i.e., fear of rejection by their peers and teachers. My research showed that the students with SEN who expressed social isolation in their verbal and non-verbal communication with their teachers and peers tended to hold poor self-perceptions, which prevented them from becoming active agents in their social and academic school life. For example, in Sunny Hill School, the student with Global Developmental Delay tended to marginalise himself from peer groups and team activities, and showed fear in leading an activity or contributing creatively to team work. Moreover, his preference to interact with younger children from other classes indicated immaturity in socialisation with same age peers and poor self-esteem as he believed he was rejected, socially and academically, by his classmates.

Lackaye et al. (2006) in Israel examined the perceptions of children with and without SEN of their academic performance through grade reports, questionnaires, scales of effort, mood, hope, and an academic self-efficacy scale. The selection of participants was not random; the researchers chose students with and without SEN attending mainstream classes with similar academic performances based on their grades. However, even where there was no significant difference in their scores, the children with SEN evaluated their academic performance as lower, preventing them from believing they had the capability to succeed at school. Even pupils with good grades gave low estimates of their capabilities. According to the researchers, this was because the pupils with SEN made more effort than their peers to get the same grades and realised that they had to devote more time to prepare for

lessons than their peers, which made them feel that they had weaker skills than their classmates.

Overall, most of the US studies in Table 2.6 suggest pupils with SEN tend to believe their academic skills are weaker than those of their peers without SEN in mainstream classes but they can have a positive image of their academic performance compared to other SEN learners. Both teachers and non SEN peers tended to have lower expectations of them. It seems that physical and emotional, internal and external environments affect the academic performance of children with SEN, suggesting academic improvement can only be achieved with the proper guidance and support of educational staff.

2.6 The social interactions between pupils with and without SEN

Until the 1970s, the interest of researchers focused primarily on the effects of inclusion on children with and without SEN from the academic perspective. As illustrated above, SEN pupils often have associated problems regarding their social and emotional development. This was highlighted in US in the 1987 Interagency Committee on Learning Disabilities (ICLD), which suggested the primary difficulty of these pupils was acquiring social skills. Students with SEN show deficits in developing and maintaining social relationships, have aggressive behaviour or are isolated from their social context, so have fewer friends than their peers (Martlew & Hodson, 1991; Hellendoorn & Ruijssenaars, 2000). Research investigating the social status, social acceptance, social skills and friendship circles of pupils with SEN in mainstream classes, compared them with their peers without SEN, in order to arrive at general conclusions that could be useful for good educational practice. Koster et al. (2009) describe the social aspect of inclusion according to social participation, social integration and the social inclusion of students with SEN, the descriptive terms used most frequently by researchers.

2.6.1 The Social status and self-esteem of pupils with SEN in inclusive classes

Table 2.7 outlines key findings concerning SEN pupils' rejection and marginalisation in mainstream classrooms, their social acceptance by peers, low social status and poor self-esteem.

Table 2.7 The Social status and self-esteem of pupils with SEN

The Social status and self-esteem of pupils with SEN
• Through sociometric techniques 566 students with SEN were not rejected in their social environment or marginalised in mainstream classrooms, especially those with leadership and sports skills (Avramidis ,2010)
• The pupils without SEN but who were low achievers showed no rejection or negative attitudes towards their peers with SEN and developed relationships ,which resulted in almost no difference between them in terms of their social position within the mainstream class (Haager & Vaughn,1995)
• Lower acceptance of children with SEN by their peers. They were as socially acceptable as their classmates with poor academic performance. The low social status of children with SEN was not solely due to learning disabilities but mainly to their poor academic attainment (Vaughn et al.,1998)
• Pupils without SEN reported the social deficits and disruptive behaviour of children with SEN caused their low social status, while pupils with SEN reported their academic deficits (Roberts & Zubrick,1992)
• A Social Behaviour Nomination Scale found 38 children with SEN within primary mainstream classes less cooperative, with fewer leadership roles. They often played the role of clown and were laughed at and taunted by their classmates (Kuhne & Wiener,2000)
• The *social participation* of primary children with SEN meant they had fewer friendships and relationships

(Koster et al.,2010)
• Students with SEN found it difficult to develop friendships with peers, had less contact with peers without SEN and more with their teachers in mainstream classrooms. They had low level of peer acceptance compared to that of peers without SEN but their social self-perception was not different from their peers' (Frostad &Pijl,2007)
• A longitudinal research study over a school year examined the social functioning of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms, the level of peer acceptance, their self-esteem, the rate of social isolation. Pupils with SEN demonstrated the same self-esteem as the other children in physical appearance and friendly relations. They had low peer acceptance compared to high achievers. They experienced social isolation in the first term, but by the end of the year, more than 50% of students with SEN had at least one mutual friend (Vaughn et al.,1996)
• The social status of children with SEN relates to their self- esteem (Woolfolk, 1995)
• Although children with SEN felt their deficit in developing skills, they did not feel less intelligent than their peers. The encouragement and motivation by teachers shaped their positive self-esteem (Bear & Minke,1996)
• The social acceptance and self-esteem of pupils with SEN in mainstream class was compared to those who received outside help and those without extra help. In terms of popularity, there were no differences between the two groups. Support outside the classroom neither harmed their social acceptance nor stigmatised them. However, pupils without SEN evaluated themselves more positively and were more popular than the two groups of students with SEN (Bakker & Bosman,2003)
• Pupils with SEN showed more negative self-esteem than their peers without SEN because of academic and social failure. Peers' and teachers' negative attitudes to their difference caused them inferiority complexes (Nunez et al.,2005)
• Four primary schools in the UK found students with SEN were victims of bullying, and less positive about developing friendships compared to their peers (Hodson et al.,2005)
• Neither the satisfactory academic performance nor the normal intelligence of children with SEN were factors which ensured their social acceptance. The label of SEN placed them at the margins (Weiner et al., 1990)
• Peer acceptance of mainstream students with SEN was the same as low-ability students who had never been identified or labelled as students with SEN. Students with SEN had low peer acceptance because they were low achievers (Larrivee & Horne,1991)

Inclusion does not only involve the academic integration of students with SEN in mainstream settings but also their social integration. There is a range of views concerning the social integration of students with SEN. Some small-scale case studies have shown that these students experienced low peer acceptance compared to their non-SEN peers and had low social status because of their poor academic attainments (Vaughn et al, 1998), while their social deficits and disruptive behaviours were identified by non-SEN peers as the main reason for their low social acceptance (Roberts & Zubrick, 1992). Different findings emerged from studies of the general self-esteem of students with SEN compared to their non-SEN peers. Bear and Minke (1996) found that less emphasis on the academic attainment of students' with SEN shifted the interest to non-academic skills and on motivation and support by teachers, parents and peers. However, as Nunez et al's (2005) study measuring general self-esteem found, students with SEN had negative perceptions compared to their non-SEN peers. The positive interaction and social acceptance between non-SEN low achievers and SEN students (Haager & Vaughn, 1995) was another finding but their low acceptance and rejection by non-SEN mainstream students was evident (Larrivee & Horne, 1991). These studies enabled me to conceptualise the strong impact of an academically-oriented educational environment which places high value on performance, thus marginalising low achievers and SEN students, academically and/or socially. My findings support this as they revealed that the students with SEN experience physical and conceptual marginalisation as the teachers maintained strict pedagogic practices for delivering the curriculum which positioned the students with SEN in low ability groups, causing feelings of inferiority and poor self-perception. On the other hand, Avramidis's (2010) large scale study found that students with SEN who were active participants in

school life and had leadership and sports skills were socially accepted. As in my study, these findings suggest the impact of the environment and teachers' perceptions and pedagogic strategies have on the psychological and social status of students with SEN. An additional finding showing the difficulty students with SEN have in developing social relations with peers and their tendency to have lower age-related social skills, which inhibited their communication with peers (Frostad & Pijl, 2007). These studies are important as they suggest possible ways to make the conditions for learning and socialisation for students with SEN more inclusive.

In general, the research suggests while SEN students' own and others positioning of them as well as their academic ability contributes to their social acceptability or otherwise, the reasons behind this positioning are less clear. SEN students are not homogenous and the ideal context for one may not suit another; nevertheless the research gives few suggestions for basic protocols.

2.6.2 Collaboration and interpersonal relationships of pupils with SEN

Social relationships concern the ability to seek human contact, make friendships and to interact successfully with others. The capacity for making social relationships appears to be linked to feelings of being accepted.

Table 2.8 Collaboration and interpersonal relationships of pupils with SEN

Pupils' with SEN collaboration and interpersonal relationships
• The majority of primary students with SEN wanted to learn and work collaboratively with non-SEN peers and their social relationships improved with greater self-esteem, according to teachers and parents. They did not feel disadvantaged or exhibit different behaviour from their peers and often were not distinguished from their non-SEN peers (Banerji & Dailey,1995)
• The social acceptance of pupils with SEN links to cooperation between mainstream and special teachers, if teachers worked together to improve the instruction of all students (Vaughn et al.,1998)
• A meta-analysis of studies on social relationships showed that 75% of children with SEN had limited social relationships compared to their peers. Non-SEN pupils had a negative attitude towards pupils with SEN trying to develop meaningful social relationships (Kavale & Forness,1996)
• A meta-analysis of 32 studies found that students with SEN had difficulty maintaining social relationships compared to high achievers. No significant difference was found between pupils with SEN and underachievers but good students and teachers were negative to SEN-students' social acceptance (Nowicki,2003)

Some of the studies in Table 2.8. challenge the argument that the inclusion of students' with SEN can have a positive effect on their socialisation as these students in mainstream classes experienced less sympathy and had poor social interactions compared to average or high-performers (Nowicki, 2003; Kavale & Forness, 1996). These findings were based on the meta-analysis of numerous studies concerning the interpersonal relationships of SEN students with peers in mainstream classrooms. An additional explanation of what affects the social relationships and self-esteem of students with SEN in mainstream settings, was the impact of teachers' collaborative work to support the needs of students with SEN and motivate them (Vaughn et al., 1998). Motivation and encouragement from within the school environment stimulated the interest of students with SEN to interact with non-SEN peers and thus boosted their self-esteem (Banerji & Dailey, 1995). The above studies were influential for conceptualising the impact of less cooperative/interactive environments

inhibiting students with SEN from developing successful social relations with peers and positive self-esteem.

Collaboration might be a baseline protocol for effective inclusive teaching. Collaborative teaching seemed to have positive effects on the acceptance of pupils with SEN which was attributed to the cooperation between the mainstream and special teachers. However, pupils with SEN appeared to have limited social relationships compared to their peers. Pupils without SEN showed negative attitudes towards pupils with SEN trying to develop meaningful social relationships, so there was little in the way of collaboration there.

2.6.3 Friendship

Friendship is a more intimate but integral part of the social relationships of children. Social acceptance and making friends enhances children's confidence. For students with SEN, acquiring mutual friendships can contribute to strengthening their egos and gain positive acceptance by their peers.

Table 2.9 Friendship

Friendship
• From 900 primary students with SEN, 96% nominated at least one child with whom they were mutual friends and about 67% had six or more friends. Nevertheless, the quality of friendships between children without SEN seemed better and improved in secondary school, whereas, the friendships of pupils with SEN stagnated (Vaughn & Elbaum,1999)
• Pupils with SEN developed friendships, but felt insecure about their quality and disadvantaged due to their different emotional development to peers (Al-Yagon & Mikulincer,2004)
• An experimental study of 108 primary school students with and without SEN found that while students without SEN who collaborated, became familiar with SEN peers' problems and accepted them, some SEN students felt non SEN peers wanted then to be in separate classes (Nicolaidou et al.,2006)
• The majority of pupils with SEN experienced loneliness and isolation more than their peers within mainstream classes. Their difference made them feel uncomfortable, as they stood out from the rest of the class. Students with SEN associated loneliness with boredom because they were not engaged in creative activities but focused on peer rejection (Pavri & Monda-Amaya,2000)
• Students with SEN in mainstream classrooms felt lonelier than their peers, but not less competent at finding and establishing friendly relationships (Pavri & Luftig,2000; Estell et al, 2008)
• Non -SEN students in an inclusive class with SEN peers showed acceptance, understanding and tolerance and established friendships with them, while non SEN students in traditional general classes adopted stereotypical perceptions and negative attitudes towards their peers as there was no interaction between them at school (Capper & Pickett,1994)

In terms of the social position and social integration of students with SEN in mainstream educational settings, some studies found that their relationships with non-SEN peers were poor as they experienced low peer acceptance. Pavri and Luftig (2000) pointed out students with SEN in special provision experienced loneliness compared to non-SEN students. However, Estell et al (2008) conducted a longitudinal study showing students with SEN were nominated less as friends and were less popular compared to their peers. Nevertheless, they belonged to a group in their classroom with active social participation. Vaughn and Elbaum's large scale study (1999) suggested that, although students with SEN nominated at least one mutual friend, their friendship tended not to be stable or long-lasting in secondary school compared to their non-SEN peers' friendships. These studies enabled me to realise how students with SEN behave in their social life at school and how

they experience their interactions with other students and whether they were accepted to a degree that could maintain their friendships later in school life. The views concerning friendship-making and maintaining of students with SEN are arguable, but an important factor is Pavri and Monda-Amaya's (2000) point that the social participation of students with SEN and their feeling of rejection were due to poor progress and few interactive and creative activities, which prevented them from developing constructive relations with peers. My findings supported this as the students' experiences of their social interaction and integration in the two mainstream schools made the difference with the Steiner school more evident, that is, where more group-oriented and creative activities engaged students in interaction and dialogue, thus encouraging more personal communication.

There is a plethora of studies conducted mainly in US, at different times, under different conditions in different mainstream classes, with emphasis on quantitative methods like questionnaires to investigate the educational and social aspects of students' inclusion in mainstream educational contexts. More research in the UK about the best conditions for inclusion, developing and expanding the existing research is necessary for the British government to identify and plan best practices provision for students with SEN in mainstream education. The next section examines teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards inclusion.

2.7 Perceptions and attitudes of mainstream teachers to inclusion

The adoption and implementation of effective inclusive practices for children with SEN depend on the perceptions and attitudes of teachers at the point of delivery (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). McLeskey and Waldron (2000:48) identified teachers' perceptions of inclusion as 'the most important place to begin planning an inclusion program...What stakeholders believe often serves as a major impediment (or facilitator) to the development of successful inclusive schools'. The practice of the inclusion of children with and without SEN in mainstream classes has not been unanimously accepted by all teachers, as pointed out, and reservations and objections are still expressed. Some studies show that the quality of work concerns mainstream teachers (Meltzer et al., 2004) and more generally, the progress of children with SEN in mainstream classrooms. Kataoka et al. (2004) showed that teachers expressed concerns about the extra preparation and time needed for these children. However, according to Kniveton (2004) with the gradual prevalence of inclusive education, teachers became familiar with its content and looked for ways to better implement inclusion, although they believed that the provision of support for children with SEN should be continued.

2.7.1The perceptions of teachers about the attainments of pupils with SEN in inclusive mainstream classes

Table 2.10 summarises the main points of some of the studies on teachers' perceptions regarding the attainments of students with SEN.

Table 2.10 Teachers' perceptions about pupils' with SEN attainments

Teachers' perceptions about pupils' with SEN attainments
• 57 mainstream teachers adopted teaching strategies appropriate to all pupils as students with SEN in such a learning environment used supporting strategies to complete their school work and improved their spelling. Teachers identified them as less able compared to their peers, as they exhibited cognitive deficits not consistent with their chronological ages (Meltzer et al.,2004)
• Mainstream teachers believed that even when pupils with SEN tried hard, they couldn't use learning strategies and organisational skills. Teachers' attitudes were associated with pupils' performance in cognitive subjects. When they progressed academically, were perceived by their teachers as capable and were rewarded (Meltzer et al.,2001)
• Mainstream teachers identified as the main cause of SEN their own inefficiency. Time pressures, responsibilities and large class size affected teaching and hindered efficiency in meeting the needs of all students. They were not satisfied with their instructive methods and their inadequate training or updating on Special Education issues as they based more on personal experience and less on concrete practices and felt anxiety about how to properly manage heterogeneous classes (Kataoka et al.,2004)

The involvement of well-trained teachers with up-to-date professional development regarding effective curricular strategies for the education of students with SEN is essential for achieving or improving inclusive mainstream educational settings. Some teachers identify the need for training in how to manage the diversity of students' needs in large class sizes (Kataoka et al., 2004) where students cannot cope successfully with classroom demands due to cognitive deficits (Meltzer et al., 2004). Furthermore, the Disability Discrimination Act (1995: IV, 29, 3) identifies the importance of the Teacher Training Agency and teacher training for developing awareness, self-reflection and efficiency in adapting the curriculum to students' special needs. However, Meltzer et al. (2004; 2001) showed after a strategic instruction intervention of six months, that students with learning and attention deficits progressed by learning through specific strategies which resulted in positive performance and self-perceptions. Meltzer et al's (2004; 2001) studies were significant as they highlighted the importance of teacher training to implement effective learning strategies for students with SEN, an issue identified in the findings of my study as one of the reasons for the conceptual and physical marginalisation of the students with SEN and their poor academic and social profiles.

2.7.2Teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of pupils with SEN

Table 2.11 summarises the main findings of some studies regarding what affects teachers' attitudes on pupils' with SEN inclusion in mainstream classes.

Table 2.11 Teachers' attitudes towards pupils' with SEN inclusion

Teachers' attitudes towards pupils' with SEN inclusion
• 18 secondary teachers through semi-structured interviews showed that assimilation, traditional canon and transmission pedagogy hindered the inclusion of all students, particularly those from a different cultural background (Harry, 2005)
• 28 studies found that only one third of mainstream teachers had the appropriate training, time, expertise and necessary support from managers and resources to implement inclusive practices effectively (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996)
• Semi-structured and unstructured interviews with primary and secondary mainstream teachers showed they set the criteria and boundaries of normal/deviant through inclusion/exclusion. Students with SEN identified as normal, were included, whereas others and marginalised were excluded (Waterhouse, 2004)
• Teachers were receptive to pupils with physical disabilities or learning disabilities, social difficulties, and negative to mental retardation, emotional problems, and severe academic deficits. They felt anxiety and frustration when progress was not noticeable and the expected goals were not attained (Soodak et al., 1998)
• Secondary school teachers were less open to inclusion compared to primary teachers, as specific subject knowledge increased, responsibilities and students' requirements increased (Smith, 2000)
• Pupils with SEN were not placed on gifted programmes as often as their peers without SEN as teachers found it contradictory for a child to have both learning difficulties and talents and considered only students with an IQ of over 130 and high academic performance as gifted. Teachers' low expectations made SEN pupils believe they were not able to participate in gifted programmes (Bianco, 2005)
• Teachers were negative as students' with SEN socio-emotional and academic needs could not be supported (Langton, 1999)
• Teachers were positive about inclusion's social benefits for students with SEN, but expressed concerns about possible damage to the social and academic progress of their peers (Campbell, 1997; Salend, 2001)
• Mainstream teachers preferred special education placements for the students with SEN for provided with individual support and not having impact on the learning of peers (Garriott et al.,2003)
• Whether students with SEN should be included in mainstream class links to the concept of being *fair* to non-SEN pupils (Hodkinson, 2005)
• Teachers' positive attitudes towards inclusion worried less about fairness than teachers with negative attitudes (Berry, 2006)
• Teachers' training and education were necessary to be caring and to reflect on their practices in order to teach inclusive classes (Berry, 2008)
• Through the constructive collaboration of a mainstream and a special secondary teacher, interviews revealed that they shared the same goals; mainstream teacher adapted the curriculum to the needs of all students and improved their academic performance and social relationships (Trent, 1998)

Some of the small-scale case studies in Table 2.11. stress the importance of collaboration between special and mainstream teachers for sharing instruction and adapting the curriculum to the diverse learning styles and needs of students in the classroom (Trent, 1998). Enhancing collaboration skills between mainstream and special teachers could benefit teachers as some studies showed that poor training and poor professional development concerning SEN produced negative attitudes to inclusion (Berry, 2006), low expectations about students' talents and potential (Bianco, 2005) and teachers had difficulty coping with their teaching responsibilities while responding to emotional problems, severe academic deficits and other problems (Soodak et al, 1998). It is apparent that some teachers who do not have the appropriate training to respond to SEN are overwhelmed by anxiety as they cannot respond effectively to students' socio-emotional and academic needs, and sometimes cannot get the necessary support and resources from managers, as Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) emphasised. All these issues enabled my study to take into consideration the multiple factors that affect how inclusive an

educational setting could be but also the symbolic power of teachers in managing classrooms by setting specific criteria for what they evaluate as normal and thus included, or deviant and excluded (Waterhouse, 2004). It seems that the degree of inclusion in a classroom depends not only on the central role of the teacher, training and school support but also on their personal ideological position on SEN and inclusion.

2.8 The necessity for this research

The exploratory research of this thesis adds to what is known about students' with SEN identification and positioning by teachers and peers in mainstream classes by examining how and on what basis these processes are constructed and conceptualised through meaning-making in dialogues, non-verbal behaviour and visual stimuli. Most of the research to date has relied on interviews, questionnaires or classroom observations. None that I am aware of have taken a multifaceted approach similar to this study's.

The main research question driving this study is the open-ended question: *How are students with SEN positioned and identified by teachers and peers in diverse classroom discourses?* This study adopts a view of inclusion related to ability and is situated in the local, micro context of the classroom. However, the discussion of inclusion takes into consideration how this construct may connect to power relationships and instantiate discourses which develop at the macro level.

The debate of the value of including children with SEN in mainstream classes remains open. There are still several aspects yet to be investigated in depth. Studies examining the socialisation of children with SEN in mainstream classes are few compared to those about their academic progress. However, inclusion seeks not only to improve the academic performance of pupils with SEN but also their interactions with their peers. It is necessary to investigate more deeply and widely SEN children's perceptions of the practice of inclusion. The literature has several studies examining the perceptions and attitudes of teachers and parents of these children; however, research into how the students experience the quality of inclusion in the mainstream has received less attention. The literature reveals that the voices of children with SEN or from ethnic minorities are underrepresented (Clark et al., 2003; Tangen, 2008). This study focuses on student voices to allow them to express their views, experiences, needs and desires (Broderick & Ne'eman, 2008; Keefe et al, 2006) and contribute to how inclusion and equality could live together Heshusius (2004:216) points out '[s]cholarship in special education has always been about the other-about the differing other, about the other that needs to be measured, ranked, segregated or integrated, remediated, or adjusted to'.

Finding out how knowledge about disability is constructed and how this knowledge affects students' with SEN school life will shed light on the educational practices that could ensure their participation and access to equal education, regardless of their differences. The emphasis on student voices was raised by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989) and Article 7, Children with disabilities, of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol (UN, 2006)

> States Parties shall ensure that children with disabilities have the right to express their views freely on all matters affecting them, their views being given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity, on an equal basis with other children, and to be provided with disability and age-appropriate assistance to realize that right.

An analysis of the necessary parameters for supporting a learning environment for the benefit of all children in an inclusive mainstream class is necessary. 'Careful examination of inclusion-based education is clearly needed to allay the fears that invariably surround the practice of educating disabled students with their peers.' (Daniel & King, 1997:69)

In the next chapter, the literature review, I outline the theoretical framework for the research.

CHAPTER 3
LITERATURE REVIEW -Theoretical Background

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to review theories concerning the operation of various types of educational practices and pedagogy within a social context and to explore specifically within these practices the positioning and identification of children with SEN. Multimodal theory (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, 2001) is the main theoretical focus for the research because it draws attention to multiple modes of communication and their realisation through different discourses, and was the most suitable tool for the aims of this study. However, many other theoretical positions support and clarify the aims of this research. Among these are Bakhtin's (1981, 1986) dialogical theories, and his account of social languages within which he positions language as context specific; this theory provides a helpful analytical approach for this study. Bernstein's theories of recontextualization, symbolic control, classification and framing and Steiner's philosophy of education are also explored.

3.2 The meaning of multimodality in my study

My research objectives were to identify how students with SEN experience inclusion in the classroom and how the conditions of inclusion differ from one classroom to another. I employed different theoretical tools to study how pedagogy is produced and realised through the different pedagogical practices and thereby transmitted to students (Daniels, 2001) and the ways in which this occurred in four classrooms in the three schools.

'Pedagogy' is an overarching term which refers to the social relations through which the curriculum is realised (Bernstein, 1996). As Lemke (1995) pointed out,

> We do not, in fact, usually speak face-to-face without also making meanings with pure movements, gestures, facial expressions and in a host of other symbolic ways that are fully integrated with language in our habits of communication. (p.7)

Within this study, the ways in which classrooms were spatially organised, their objects and furniture, their visual displays as well as the gesture, gaze and posture of teachers and students all related to how each teacher's particular pedagogy was delivered. This also revealed the various forms of positioning and identification of students with SEN and helped explain why the concept of inclusion in specific classrooms was realised differently. The study adopted an inclusive and comprehensive theoretical approach to the communicative landscape of the classroom. For example, semiotic approaches were originally characterised by efforts to develop a separate grammar for each means of communication, e.g. the language, images (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), sound (van Leeuwen, 1999) but

lacked an all-encompassing approach for theorising communication, which my study required. For this reason, a multimodal theory of communication needed to be employed. This theory attempts to interpret the whole phenomenon of communication in a given context, that is, through the study of language and non-linguistic modes such as wall displays, classroom arrangement, students and teachers' posture, students' gaze and gesture (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). In this context each student in the classroom can be simultaneously the agent of an action, coordinate other people and various tools, technologies and symbolic systems but is also the recipient of action, as she/he is coordinated by the same elements. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006:48) participants in semiotic (meaningful) acts are of two types: *interactive* or *represented* participants. The first type are actively involved in the process of communication by producing images, talking, reading, speaking; the second type of participants are the subjects around which communication is produced in the form of images, talking, and writing.

The positions of Kress (1993, 1997), Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2001) and Jewitt (2005, 2008) on multimodality are well suited to the aim and context of my research. Multimodal theory explores the multi-faceted meanings inherent in terms like *inclusion*, seeing it as a dynamic, inherently social, collaborative process mediated by a series of cultural tools, such as language and not located exclusively in the cognitive field. It also involves the construction of values, policies and identities. In my study, pedagogic practices are seen as manifestations, syntheses of different types of social data. The need to look at the social and policy issues and their effects on the design of pedagogic discourses in different classrooms is managed through my theoretical framework. The synthesis of semiotic tools such as language, with the non-verbal, e.g. physical space, posture, gesture, is identified in actions and interactions, social relations, the material world and semiosis in general.

For example, a learning environment is articulated through specific ways of using language, specific practices, interactions and social relations between students and teachers, with a specific structure and use of the classroom as physical space within which inclusive participation, the positioning and identification of children with SEN takes place in learning and social activities. An analysis of semiotic and non-semiotic tools can reveal who has the power and in what ways meanings are developed in communicative interactions (Jewitt, 2005). Adopting such an approach, the interactions and communication between students can be studied in the light of practices of different discourses which are employed in each classroom. Different learning environments and a variety of discourses and dialogues can be evaluated as supportive or non-supportive of inclusion.

Students build and re-build their worlds not only through language but also in cooperation with actions, interactions, non-linguistic symbolic elements, through the use of objects, tools, technologies, through distinct modes of thought and evaluation. Non-linguistic data allow the meaning and aspects of the material world to be examined; for example, why the teacher decided to stand in one place rather than another; perhaps the teacher and students talk and act in a certain way, as an

aspect of collaborative teaching - a student with SEN might be the *leader* in a collaborative task in the classroom, but in the playground could just be one of the *players* in his group. I similarly considered variations in classroom politics exemplified through the behaviour of teachers; for example, a teacher may be *strict/authoritarian* when she speaks loudly and sharply to students, while a student with similar behaviour is *naughty*.

When the same interactions are frequently repeated in the same social context, this can lead to the development of individualistic, competitive, non-cooperative institutions. Institutions in a broader sense involve the educational system, and in more specific, the operations in a classroom. Meanings emerge from practices in the contexts and social networks within which students are socialised; hence the linguistic and non-linguistic symbols form the basis of the interpretation and construction of meanings which students make as individuals.

3.2.1 Multimodality

The purpose of this study is to identify how students with SEN are positioned and identified by teachers and peers in different classroom discourses, I need a method that will allow me to explore the ways through which positioning and identification are regulated by the context of the classroom in order to understand the different discourses that different pedagogies instantiate. Multimodality is organised around the two poles of content and expression. Content has two levels - discourse and design, - while expression is divided into production and distribution. Kress and van Leeuwen highlight the social dimension of discourse and consider language as a socio-political phenomenon (Gee, 1996); 'Discourses are socially constructed of knowledges (some aspect of) reality' (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001:4). I selected the work of Kress because he has conducted extensive research with Jewitt and van Leeuwen around the multimodal production of pedagogies in classrooms, in particular, for example, the multimodal production of English in classrooms (Kress et al., 2004), the multimodal production of knowledge in secondary science classrooms (Kress et al., 2001).

Discourses are not realised only through language but also through other semiotic systems. In any society all the available semiotic modes can be used on occasion to articulate meaning. Furthermore, any text through one or more semiotic modes can be a monomodal or multimodal discourse (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001:24, 40). The *design* of discourses in communication, which according to Kress and van Leeuwen (2001:45), refers to 'the modes for representation, and the framing for that representation', organises the *expression*, that is, the selection of the appropriate modes, depending on the communicative goal. The *design* situates the discourse in a particular communicative context, e.g. an advertisement, and selects the appropriate mode for the realization of the communicative interaction. The *production* shapes the design and adds significance, the specific material for the production. The *distribution* is associated with the re-coding of the semiotic products or events for a particular audience and serves the production (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001:22, 87).

As discourses can be understood as knowledge about reality developed in particular contexts according to the interests of the individuals who produce them, they need to be realised through broad semiotic means (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001:4). For example, in the classroom, different discourses control how students learn, how many and what type of students are organised in ability groups, what and how they are taught. These factors are complemented by interpretations of why they are organised in a specific way and what affect this has on students' learning and socialisation, and whether this organisation benefits or inhibits students with SEN. The design of the classroom represents how the discourse is formatted or the type of pedagogic mode in play (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). Furthermore, the design, realised through semiotic resources, is also realised through *different materialities*. For instance, the design of a *performative pedagogy* (Bernstein, 1996), where emphasis is placed on students' performance and assessment, could be realised either through the specialised content of the curriculum, the assessment procedures, the placement of students in ability groups or the specialised content of the curriculum as represented in a classroom's displays.

The process of production relates also to the medium through which a semiotic product is constructed. If the design and the production are detached, then the production alone expresses and executes the intentions of the person who produced the design (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001:7). For example, in this study, some teachers in the mainstream classrooms followed a predetermined design of curricular activities for students with SEN. They did not produce them but they executed them. However, the design of some of the displays in the classrooms was produced by them, reflecting their own diacritical marks, interests and intentions. As Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) explain, the design, production and distribution of discourses are interpreted in various ways, depending on the intentions of those who design and produce them, but also in the context within which interpretations of discourses are developed,

> Which discourses interpreters or users may bring to bear on a semiotic product or event has everything to do, in turn, with their place in the social and cultural world, and also with the content. The degree to which intention and interpretation will match depends on context. (p.8)

For instance, in this study, the production of a poster about the characteristics of good students providing support to peers that struggle with Numeracy might have various intentions and interpretations. An interpretation could be that either the poster, as a semiotic product, intends to foster the collaboration and socialisation of students, or that it intends to make the boundaries between the two categories of students, the high and low ability group, or the good and bad students clearer.

Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) introduced the concept of *design*, to replace the traditional terms *writing* or *speech production*. Design is a metalanguage for meaning production, a flexible and functional grammar, which can describe both language differences and the multimodal processes of meaning making. The basic principle is that each text (message) is multimodal. The design is based on the

diversity of language, the metalanguages of meaning, and on the active participation and action of the social actors. The diversity of language is associated with a variety of linguistic forms, i.e. different accents, different levels of style and different dialects, which serve different purposes in different social contexts and for different social groups. The key issue in language use is the way in which each linguistic act is unique, derived from different source, and reshapes the world (Kalantzis & Cope, 1999).

The New London Group (2000) has made a significant theoretical contribution in this area and views pedagogy as design because it incorporates both the process of producing and the product. The process for producing a text includes three phases, the 'Available Designs – Designing - The Redesigned' (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000:23). This is an open process, which takes into account the available sources for the production of meaning, attempts to reposition them for a new set of circumstances, with the ultimate goal of transforming them into new meanings (Bazerman, 2008:740). In the process of *Redesigning* the actors rely on 'cultural resources and uniquely positioned subjectivity' to produce 'a new Available Design, a new meaning-making resource' (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000:23). This is important as during the process of *Designing*, the meaning-making process, the actors are changed by the outcomes.

> Every act of meaning, both appropriates Available Designs and re-creates in the Designing, thus producing new meaning as The Redesigned...Through these processes of Design ...meaning-makers remake themselves. They reconstruct and renegotiate their identities. (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000:309)

The three *Designs of Meaning* (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000:23) can help us to understand ways in which teachers and students communicate in their specific classrooms based on the available semiotic resources; how the specific pedagogies in each classroom under study are produced through already available semiotic resources, Available Designs; and how these semiotic resources are transformed by teachers, The Redesigned, based on their subjective values and beliefs and on cultural and school values. This process is important as all modes of communication are in constant change depending on the needs of the society and of the context within which they are used (Kress et al, 2001).

The Available Design pertains to the resources for producing meaning (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001:5). Designing is the process of transforming the resources of meaning, such as reading, observation, listening, for the purposes of a communicative event. The Redesigned refers to the outcome, the product of the design. The fields, the areas, the modes for the production of meaning, which interrelate, are identified as the 'Linguistic modes...Visual Meanings; Audio Meanings; Gestural Meanings; Spatial Meanings; and Multimodal Meanings' (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000:28). Each area has its own functional grammar. Multimodal Meanings incorporate the meanings from all the other modes (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). Kress (2001:174), explains how the Design communicates, through the

'interpersonal, ideational and textual aspects' of various modes, the content of teaching in the classroom,

> Interpersonal aspects may be placed particularly with gesture, intonation, or the use of the body in space. Ideational aspects may be distributed across image, writing or gesture. Textual aspects may be assigned more heavily to syntactic (surface) order, gesture, the body's placement, and so on.

The application of multimodality in this study, both as a theory and method in the classroom, focuses on the discourses associated with the experiences of students, the procedures for describing and interpreting the elements of a Design for a systematic, analytical and conscious understanding of the elements through which students interact. to the aim is to relate, compare and interpret the designs of meaning in their specific social and cultural contexts and to analyse the practices for the production of meaning in the diverse social, communicative and cultural contexts encountered in the research.

3.2.2 Semiotic evidence

Classrooms can be seen as sites where multimodal signs represent institutional discourses concerning pedagogy and the curriculum (Jewitt, 2005). Multimodal theory enables the study of the ways through which discourses are designed and also highlights the factors that relate to educational policies and social issues regarding the inclusion of students with SEN, such as the policies of mainstream schools, the teacher's role, the changes in the political and educational context and their relationship to classroom practices (Kress et al., 2005). For example, this study explored the relationship between social factors and practices in the classroom by looking at ways in which educational policies about the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream schools are reflected in the curriculum and its pedagogy.

The use of social semiotics views all semiotic acts and processes as social acts and social processes. Both individual and social acts of semiosis are organized by systems signifying power and solidarity. Each member of a social group needs signs to reveal who belongs to each social group and, by forming a certain identity, she differentiates herself from the members of other social or cultural groups. These sign systems have social meanings. Kress and Hodge (1988) argue that semiotics provide analytical tools for people who are involved in different discourses which bear different social meanings, enabling the processes and structures, which construct meaning to be described and explained.

The smallest semiotic unit is the *message* which must have a material form and existence through signs, which are units of meaning. The *sign* incorporates the form and meaning, the signifier and signified, and represents the meanings of sign makers. This study looked at relationships in their social context, the signs and the sign makers, in the construction of classrooms with students with SEN. In sign making, the sign makers realise their interests. The teachers and students involved

in the classrooms under analysis brought their experiences, interests and interpretations, which could be different from those of the researcher's. Therefore, multiple ideas and explanations about the meaning of multimodal signs in the classroom are provided in the analysis.

Various discourses of educational policies surround the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms, e.g. ability categorisation, academic achievement, Individual Educational Targets, special support, National Tests achievement, which express their meanings through articulation as signs. For example, a classroom's visual displays can reflect the curriculum guidelines and the criteria for the specific class, and can communicate the expectations of the teacher and the school about the students' performance and behaviour. These meanings are expressed in a language that constructs identities (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). The various meanings attached to a display are expressed as signs in the different modes. For example, the meanings of a display about the curriculum could be presented in different modes, i.e. the content might be handwritten or word-processed, with large or small letters, coloured or plain letters, mounted or plain, with a prominent or less prominent position in the classroom.

The selection of specific modes over others, equally available in the classroom, realises a specific discourse. For example, if the content of most of the displays in a classroom refers to the core subjects of the curriculum and their form is mainly produced by the teacher, then this could represent an authority discourse where the teacher has more power and control than the students over the selection, production and distribution of the content of displays. The reason might be that students in this school are assessed on the basis of their academic performance and achievement in the National Tests, which might again reflect another discourse about each student's academic identity. Therefore, different discourses are designed using different visual displays, spatial arrangements and other modes of communication, activated by the pedagogy of each classroom (Jewitt, 2005).

The role of the teacher is important, as s/he takes decisions about the ways in which the content of the visual displays is communicated to students. For example, in this study it was essential to discover how the content of a poster conveying information about students' socialisation for their personal and academic development could be actually realised through the pedagogic practice of the students collaborating in team-oriented tasks. The visual displays, the spatial arrangement of the classroom, the objects and furniture are the pedagogic tools (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001) through which students are socialised according to the teacher's and school's expectations, in already established systems about, for example, the hierarchical categorisation of ability and knowledge. For example, a classroom's visual displays might explicitly express as the objective of its pedagogy the competitive skills that students need to develop in order to meet the academic expectations of the school in the National Tests.

3.2.3 Media and modes

The *modes* are the non-material, abstract resources of meaning making within gesture, images, speech, writing, and the *media* are the material forms, like paint, wood, paper, through which the modes are understood (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001:22).According to Halliday (1978) the semiotic resources of modes have three meta-functions, that is, three kinds of meaning: *ideational* meaning, *interpersonal* meaning and *textual* meaning. The ideational meaning refers to the representations of what people experience in their environment. The interpersonal meaning refers to the position of a subject in relation to a person or something else. The textual meaning refers to the cohesion of a text, that is, the links which hold it together. These meta-functions are found in all the communicative modes and were explored in this study to identify the meaning-making produced by modes, i.e. displays, gesture, posture, gaze, spatial and furniture arrangement (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996) through which different discourses were realised in each of the classrooms observed. More specifically, in order to describe the interactions that developed in each of the observed classrooms, 'action, speech and the visual' (Kress, 2001:64) data were collected. *Action* in the classroom was observed through the non-verbal semiotics of communication, i.e. gesture, body posture, movement, gaze, and gesture, of both the teachers and the students; the *context* of the action, i.e. the ways classroom space was organised; and the *objects* of the action, i.e. the material objects. In the same way as in Kress's description, '...a 'thick descriptive' account was produced to show how actional, visual, and linguistic resources work together to make meanings.' (Kress, 2001:64)

In this study, the meanings of the three structures- action, speech and the visual - were studied in relation to each other to allow the meanings produced in the classroom through action to appear. For example, the ideational meaning of action in the classroom pertained to the kind of meanings produced through action and in what ways these meanings were realised. The interpersonal meaning of action could be realised by studying, for example, the kind of communication - collaborative/individual or dialogue/monologue - produced between teachers/students and students/students. The textual meaning needed to be studied through the modes that produced different texts of communication. Moreover, as Kress (2001) explains, the comparisons and contrasts that could be made between the different modes employed in each action produced a more comprehensive view of the communication of teachers and students. 'Through the comparison of actions, modes and contexts we identified repetitions, reiterations, structured patterns and transformations of action.' (Kress, 2001:65)

Other examples from this study of the ideational, interpersonal and textual *meta-function* of communication (Jewitt, 2006), refer to how knowledge about the world is represented by the visual displays or the objects available in the classroom (ideational meta-function); how students with SEN are positioned by the spatial arrangement of the classroom in relation to ability (interpersonal meta-function); the ways through which the elements of the classroom structure produce different discourses (textual meta-function). In the case of the semiotic modes of movement

and gesture, their 'ideational meaning, interpersonal meaning and textual meaning' were also studied (Kress, 2001:64). The textual meaning in movement and gesture refers to the similarity or contrast of movements and gestures that could develop cohesion or discord in a communicative event. Students' gaze during their interactions was interpreted as meaningful. There are different meanings in gaze, i.e. attention, disengagement, directed, non-directed (Jewitt, 2006). A semiotic resource for gaze is attitude/visual angle, which could signify involvement or detachment from what is being looking at. The *length* of time that gaze is held could signify power or lack of power and the *stability* of a gaze could express certainty or hesitancy. The use of visual displays and other non-linguistic resources can constrain or enhance meaning-making, depending on how they are employed, for what purposes by teachers and students and what kind of discourses they produce (Jewitt & Kress, 2003).

As Goodwin (2001:160-161) explains, in order to understand the significance of visual semiotics, i.e. spatial organisation, displays, gaze, gesture, in meaning-making, these should be seen as being incorporated in a context where other meaning-making modes and activities develop. For instance, in this study, looking at ways in which collaboration was realised in a specific classroom, the verbal interactions of students with SEN and their peers in collaborative learning tasks were examined in relation to the spatial arrangement of the students' seats as another semiotic mode for enhancing or constraining interaction. In this way, communication and action in a specific context were seen holistically, as both visual and linguistic data were studied.

Furthermore, I was interested in understanding how one mode interacts with another, as for example, when students discuss issues stemming from specific visual events which they witnessed, e.g. the naughty behaviour of a peer. Another aspect of looking at visual signs relates to the development of visual incidents in time, as this enables the observer to gain an inclusive picture of the interactions of the participants under study. For example, the gaze of a student towards a peer when a specific incident occurs at a specific time, and how the student's gaze towards the same peer changes according to different incidents is important to note.. The analysis of the above elements of meaning-making through visual semiotics in the classroom necessitates the collection of information regarding the spatial organisation of the classroom, the dialogic and non-verbal interactions of teachers and students, and looking at communication as progressing over time. This process is not easy as I had to engage in an intense and in depth observation of events in the classroom. In this study, photographs were not an adequate mode for capturing the elements constituting communication in the classroom. My subjective criteria for deciding to focus on particular displays, parts of the classrooms, from a specific angle, pertain to the intentions and objectives of this study. Visual data complement and corroborate data collected through other qualitative methods, looking at communication, e.g. interviews, observations. Methodological issues were also raised by the way visual data are transcribed. For example, the transcription of a student's gesture could be seen as one element co-occurring within the broader framework of verbal and non verbal communication. Furthermore, the events that

enclose the non verbal interactions of students within and outside the classroom impact on the ways in which they interact. As a result, any transcription of visual data should rely on the use of multiple methods, and especially

> ...looking in one direction at how to accurately recover through a systematic notation the endogenous structure of the events being investigated, while simultaneously keeping another eye on the addressee/reader of the analysis by attempting to present relevant descriptions as clearly and vividly as possible (Goodwin, 2001:161)

Signs in multimodal theory are viewed 'as motivated, transformative and mediating social interactions in the material world that shape consciousness or 'mind" (Jewitt, 2006), a perspective which does not distinguish the social from the individual. She suggests that signs inform us about people's choices, which tend to be socially controlled. Nevertheless, the sign maker could decide which signs to choose, depending on the social context and her power to choose or resist social forces (Kress, 2000:152),

> ...the sign is the expression of the maker's interest through the motivated expression in apt form of the meaning of the signmaker...The more the sign- maker is in the culture, the more he or she is 'socialized', the more the shapedness of the social and cultural resources will be in the foreground.

For example, in this study, a teacher's choice of specific semiotic resources over others available in the classroom is shaped by his/her individual social experiences and his/her compliance with the social rules of society realised in government-based and school-based policies. This means that the teacher is constrained by school and educational policies and does not act autonomously. On the other hand, the extent to which the teacher can select which resources to use in the classroom depends on the power he/she has to resist social rules and also on his/her compliance with the rules of the school. As a result, the *signifier*, who produced the sign, has a relationship with and the *signified*, that is, their *interest* in producing it in order to represent something (Kress, 1993). In the classroom, the teacher (signifier) chose - according to her interest - the kind of visual displays (signified) to produce and how to produce them in order to represent the academic expectations of the school with which students are expected to comply. However, the social context affects the interest of teachers in the production of signs. For example, in an individualistic and competitive society, the teacher's interest might be to promote the academic and social skills that students would find useful, and on this basis could position students in a hierarchy of high and low ability and identify them according to their high and low performance.

The study of ways in which the social context impacts on the interests of the signifier and consequently, on the pedagogic discourses produced in the classroom, is essential. As social semiotics and multimodal theory focusing on the analysis of meaning making and not on how meaning making is socially situated, Bernstein's

(1996, 2000) theory, was used in this study to evaluate the ways in which the production of meaning-making is situated within the context of the school and educational policies. The study explored ways in which pedagogical discourses are produced and what kind of interests these serve concerning the positioning and identification of students with SEN in specific ways in the classroom. The classroom as a sign is produced by the contact between the social context (educational policies) with the sign makers' interests, which are both involved in producing pedagogic discourses within which students with SEN are positioned and identified in specific ways. Therefore, the positioning and identification of students with SEN in the classroom could be best understood as the development of a particular kind of pedagogic discourse.

It could also be said that the activities involved in pedagogic discourses create subjective experiences which are resources for students to develop their self-identities or multiple identities (Williams et al., 2007). However, different pedagogic discourses create different positioning and identification of students. Students' positioning and identification are both constructed through their participation in teaching and learning practices. Teaching and learning practices are shaped by discourses (Gee, 1999) within and outside the classroom, and affect students' positioning and identification. Through the analysis of students' interactions, it was possible to show how discourses impact on students' dialogues and position students and therefore give differentiated opportunities for participation in classroom practices. Bernstein's reference to the principles of strong/weak *classification* and *framing* (see Section 3.4.1.4) shows how pedagogic discourses mediate students' and teachers' differentiated access to learning and teaching practices and how this distinction differentiates and constrains the degree of inclusion for some students in the process of learning and socialisation.

3.2.4 Visual grammar and the analysis of multimodal texts

In communication, a range of semiotic modes can be used and interrelate, such as language, audio sounds, all kinds of images, body language. These semantic approaches are characterized by the development of separate grammars for each semiotic mode. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996:39) collected and formulated the factors associated with multimodality and formed a multimodal theory of communication that attempts to interpret the whole phenomenon of individual modes of modern communication. When social researchers stood awkwardly in front of developments and when research has failed to investigate the contribution of different semiotic systems to the way in which discourse is constructed in each genre (Hodolidou, 2005: 91), then Kress and van Leeuwen devised a methodological tool, both qualitative and critical, a grammar of visual text, which can be used for the analysis of image and the study of the interrelationship between verbal and visual communication (Bonidis, 2004: 160).

According to Hodolidou (2005:91-93), visual and verbal communication is a socio-political phenomenon, a product of social and cultural practices. Furthermore, images are not mere representations, but construct a network of relationships and

create channels of communication between people, places and objects. Multimodality treats these phenomena as aspects of a whole. The semiotic systems of the text are not considered as a simple synthesis, but are studied in combination, not separately and fragmentarily. This involves a simultaneous analysis of all the modes which constitute text; there are no primary modes, i.e. language codes and secondary non-linguistic modes.

Looking at communication and its representation through a multimodal lens (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996), this study was able to explore the available semiotic resources of each observed classroom, through which the instructional and regulative (Bernstein, 2000) aspects of discourse revealed power and control over students/teachers' and students/students' interpersonal communication. The material production of semiotic resources, their design, production and distribution (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001), allow the discovery of how strong or weak the principles of power and control are in any classroom as they produce diverse pedagogic structures that position students in different categories, for instance, ability groups; produce different discourses, i.e. different categories of knowledge based on specialised curriculum content; and develop different contexts, i.e. remote space for the support of students with SEN. Specifically, the semiotic resources of each of the classrooms observed in the research, through which the different pedagogies were realised, articulated how diverse the level of inclusion of students with SEN could be based on 'the whole 'dance' of material meaning-making' (Lemke, 1995:7). In the next section, I focus on the theories of Bakhtin about discourse, the process of meaning making instantiated in talk and the meanings that emerge from talk.

3.3 How Bakhtin's theories informed my study

My study needed to develop an approach to examining the discourses/ involved in the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classrooms. For this reason, examination of the semiotic practices that develop in a classroom was necessary to see how its critical transformation might be achieved. The social semiotics approach, based largely on the social dialogics of Bakhtin and the functional semantics of Halliday, focuses not only on the form but also on the social function of language. Bakhtin suggested a new way of looking at language which was different from the position of traditional linguistics. He challenged de Saussure's theory about the distinction between *langue*, a unitary language, and *parole*, individual speech, as it could not capture the dialogical function of language (Ivanov, 1999). Furthermore, Bakhtin's three aspects of discourse (1986: 88) - *neutral word, other's word, my word*- stress that the disparity between my word and the other in a multicultural context is not only associated with individual differences but also differences in language and culture (Marchenkova, 2005). According to Lemke (1990: ix) 'language is not only vocabulary and grammar: ...is a system of resources for making meanings.' Based on this assumption, communication within a classroom, as in any other context, is a social process, i.e. communication is not only through the transmission of signs or

signals, but also through the creation and proper handling of social situations. As Lemke (1995:7) states:

> Language does not operate in isolation. Meanings always get made in contexts where social expectations and non-linguistic symbols play a role. When I speak of the discourse that is being produced on a particular occasion, I am talking about a social process that always involves more than language.

This view might offer an explanation as to why it is not easy to transform a monologic learning environment into a more collaborative and dialogic one. The creation of desirable collaborative and interactive/dialogic repertoires cannot come into being just because someone is aware of them theoretically. Teachers and students have experience, of handling social situations in specific ways. These cannot be transformed automatically from theory into dialogic practice.

For Halliday (1978), social reality or culture is itself a semiotic construction. A context of speech is itself a semiotic construct in form, which allows participants to predict elements of the current mode of speech, and to interpret one another, as the speech progresses.

> Language is one of the semiotic systems that constitute a culture; one that is distinctive in that it also serves as an encoding system for many (though not all) of the others. (p.2)

Halliday further (1978:162) pointed out:

> Language mediates between ourselves and the two components of our environment, the natural ...and the social environment... Every social group develops its own particular view of the world and of society.

It could be argued that individual development depends on the nature of the communication and interaction with others. In this case, meaning-making is approached as a social practice and is not treated as something autonomous, associated exclusively with individual thought. In a classroom through everyday actions, students and teachers create a unique social structure by asserting their own positions and roles, and by strengthening and shaping the special conditions for particular systems of identities, values and knowledge. If the use and application of analytical tools of discourse revealed that mainstream classrooms need transformation if they are to become more inclusive, this would require the examination and subsequent transformation of the discourses that take place in the classrooms.

A key question social semiotics tries to answer is: *how does an action acquire its meaning in a society or in my research, in the micro society of a classroom?* The answer is that each action makes sense when situated in a broader context. Any act or event is situated in specific contexts to gain meaning and the meaning of an act or an

event is comprised of the relationships between the act/event and the context. For example, some actions show the teacher as the person who carries them out, e.g. assessment, while others relate more to the students, e.g. the recall of previous learning experiences. Most actions can be done by anyone, but the meaning is completely different depending on the status of the individual. When the teacher asks questions, the students believe that s/he knows the answers, but when a student raises a question, this means that s/he does not know the answer. A class during a lesson is characterised by specific actions in relation to the negotiation of the thematic content of the lesson by teacher and students. The theoretical tools of social semiotics can be used as approaches to discourse.

In this research, in order to understand the process through which students with SEN are positioned and identified in their classrooms as well as focussing on a range of signs, I focused in particular on the quality of discourse developed, that is, on the oral interactions and dialogues that were built in the specific local discourse communities, looking at these in conjunction with other signs. The ways through which meanings about the positioning and identification of students with SEN are co-constructed and negotiated were explored through the verbal interactions of students. During the interactions, the different functions of the participants which determine the communicative nature of the process were studied in order to discover the ways in which meanings are co-constructed through dialogue. Bakhtin's theory of language - that is, dialogism, social languages and authoritative discourse/ internally persuasive discourse and evaluation was used as a framework. These concepts are used for analysing the discourses of contrasting classroom settings. Dialogic analysis reveals different ways in which students and teachers express and echo a variety of standpoints.

3.3.1 The role of Dialogism in my research

One of the questions which dialogical analysis can respond to is whether the positioning and identification of children with SEN by teachers and peers allows them to fully participate in the educational process and whether their social development and learning make the transition from the social context to individual understanding (Vygotsky, 1997). Based on Bakhtin (1981), I want to argue that the learning process is a dialogic process, either between the student and teacher or an internal dialogue of the student as each tries to create meanings. According to Bakhtin (1984:213) 'Two voices is the minimum for life, the minimum for existence'. Bakhtin's dialogue looks at the interactions developed between individuals, cultures and between individual and context (Marchenkova, 2005). From this standpoint, the processes of learning and the social development of students with and without SEN is not something that is transmitted automatically from teacher to student, but each participant. The process of identifying, comparing, differentiating and developing meanings about the positioning and identification of students with SEN within the discourse of the classroom requires the active participation and interaction of students, which implies a dialogic process.

The term 'dialogic' (Bakhtin, 1981) implies that the meaning of a word or a sentence is never univocal, but is generated by the interactions that occur between different voices and different perspectives. These dialogic views are core to the positions adopted in the thesis for four main reasons:

- First, because of the need to explore the collaborative construction of the meanings attached to words, particularly the words of students, and how the meanings assigned to them are reached in the context of communication.

- Second, the construction of meanings by students requires negotiation from their own context in the classroom as well as their active participation in dialogues and practices.

- Third, because dialogic views recognise that communicative actions are social events which contribute to the development of specific learning environments and, as such, should be discussed and critically analyzed.

- And fourth, they reflect the fact that the production of specific meaning is a dynamic process, a 'hybridization' (Bakhtin, 1981), which requires collaborative research and students' active participation.

Bakhtin (1986:71) focused his efforts on the study of *utterances*, the basic unit of oral communication. The elements of language as a social phenomenon, the real dimension of language, are not abstract linguistic forms like words or sentences, but the social event of spoken interaction/dialogue, the utterance, within a frame or frames of reference. An utterance, a moment in a dialogue, is a social event that contributes to the social action of the dialogue (Lemke, 1995:22). Voloshinov (1976: 105) pointed out that,

> The concrete utterance ...is born, lives, and dies in the process of social interaction between the participants of the utterance. Its form and meaning are determined...by the form and character of this interaction.

According to this view, each utterance in the linguistic interactions/dialogues of children with SEN and their peers, inside and outside of the classroom, contributes to the construction of an inclusive or non-inclusive educational environment and should be studied in this dimension. Furthermore, each utterance should be explored as a social event, an integral part of a specific moment of inclusive activity. This means that the same utterance could produce totally different social events in less or more inclusive situations.

> For Bakhtin language is always situational, contextual, socially stratified, and ultimately dialogic...every utterance is thus placed in a social context and is dependent on this context for its meaning (Graham, 2000:86).

Bakhtin (1986:95) believes that meanings do not emerge within the individual action of the will whereby people identify with precision the meaning of their discourse, but a verbal act is inevitably determined by its previous uses, in the same or different contexts, by the same or different people. Bakhtin's position provides an explanation for the situation where students who collaborate in group tasks, may demonstrate the same collaborative and dialogic skills in a different context; hence collaboration is important for the verbal interaction of students in the classroom. According to Bakhtin (1986), the verbal acts or the communicative actions which participants express during an interaction are directly related to previous verbal acts which the same people were involved in.

According to Bakhtin (1981) each utterance is characterized by a seamless relationship between *multi-voicedness* and *dialogicality*. The communication process could take place in a public field, where meanings are discussed and negotiated. He describes the process of constructing an utterance, to appropriate it, to place it in a new content, as a new social event which belongs to us and to others.

> The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes "one's own" only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language (it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his words!), but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one's own. (Bakhtin, 1981:293-294)

According to Bakhtin, language is mediated through social interactions. In my study, it could be argued that the language the children appropriated in their dialogues was learned through social interactions driven by the structure of specific pedagogic discourses or *social languages*, to use Bakhtin's term. If language is not interactive, ideological, and implicit, it cannot be meaningful. Each person sets up her individual ideological consciousness through the selective assimilation of the continuous speech of others, which she transfers and appropriates. Individual expression is basically the product of different voices and discourses which relate to another voice through the woven 'social language' (Bakhtin, 1981). Edwards and Potter (1992:2-3) agree.

> And rather than seeing such discursive constructions as expressions of speakers' underlying cognitive states, they are examined in the context of their occurrence as situated and occasioned constructions whose precise nature makes sense to participants and analysts alike, in terms of the social actions those descriptions accomplish.

If the context changes then the social actions and their co-constructed meanings change. Consequently, if it is desirable to change a learning environment, then its present form should be analysed and studied through the language which is used,

the perspectives and considerations which are presented as more inclusive as opposed to others, the ideologies to which students are exposed regarding the inclusivity of their peers with SEN, the identities that emerge, and at last, through this process, conclusions can be formulated about the nature of the learning environment in relation to the degree of students inclusion. This could be made possible through the use of appropriate tools for the analysis of students' discourse.

Bakhtin's argument that in order to appropriate specific meanings of a word a person must actively participate in appropriate discourses is also supported by Wittgenstein. For Wittgenstein (1977:24-25), a thought is a sentence with meaning and the meaning of an expression is its use: 'the meaning of a word is its use in the language.' According to Peccei (1999:5) from a pragmatic view, which focuses on meanings that emerge not only by linguistic forms but also by 'knowledge about the physical and social world', the meaning pertains to utterances rather than on the words and sentences. Moreover, an utterance, according to pragmatics, is 'a physical event created at a particular point in point for a particular communicative purpose'.

Schriffin (2002) and Gee (1999) used the same concept in their discourse analysis research which considers the study of language in use beyond the sentence boundary. From this perspective, students cannot learn the function of a communicative act if they are only spectators. They need to actively participate in pedagogic practices, to experience themselves the use of utterances in order to reach their meanings. To understand what an utterance refers to in a particular context, (for example, *inclusion* in the classroom), the student must engage in dialogues that relate to the inclusion of peers with SEN, to explore the meanings of inclusion through its different ways of realisation. Meaning is always associated with an utterance's context of use and related norms or rules for its implementation. The objective is to understand how the specific implementing rules of the classroom are appropriated by students and teachers through their dialogic repertoires of discourse.

3.3.2 Social language

According to Bakhtin (1981, 1986), language cannot be studied independently of the sociocultural context of which is an integral part; he uses the term *social languages*. According to this, each person communicates, interacts with other people according to a particular social language which is the characteristic of a particular group of which she is a member, e.g. lawyers, doctors, gangs, hip hop artists . Each social speech genre embodies common assumptions, interpretations and values about the group where the social language develops. According to Bakhtin, the linguistic meaning of a particular utterance is understood against the whole background of a language's historical and cultural roots. The true meaning of an utterance is understood when compared to the background of other utterances that address the same topic, a background which is formed by opposing views, opinions, judgments and values (Bakhtin, 1981:281).

This approach to the study of meaning later became formative in 'principle of intertextuality' (Lemke, 1985) because it views the meaning of each utterance in a dialogue to be the result of a relationship between what has been said and the social realities, not solely a result of the relationship between linguistic forms or between speakers. Meanings are attached to each word, utterance or act always in relation to other words, utterances or acts of a similar kind. A student attaches specific meanings to specific phrases depending on the dialogues in which s/he participated during her/his school life. Therefore, students from socio-cultural environments where they had the opportunity to participate in dialogues pertaining to issues of inclusivity, diversity, SEN, were more easily able to participate and appropriate the discourses related to inclusive educational environments and evaluate their position and consider their peers with SEN through contextualised discourse within the practices of the classroom.

Bakhtin (1981) coined the term *heteroglossia* to refer to the diversity of language, the way in different utterances at different times, places and social positions are systematically different. He refers to the *social languages of heteroglossia* and to *social voices*. A distinctive social language always belongs to an identifiable person or social group and is distinguished from others because of its particular sociocultural features. The *social languages* which each student brings to the classroom or the different types of speech act that have already been appropriated determine how easy or difficult it is for them to appropriate the new language introduced in the classroom. According to Bakhtin (1981), people appropriate the voices of their community and to the extent that people have an individual voice, it has been shaped by the available social voices through a process of gradual appropriation.

From this standpoint, teachers talk in a variety of ways based on specific social languages that adopt specific attitudes, (political, sociological, and epistemological), about the world. The meanings that accompany teachers' talk have a significant impact on the views that students shape about the nature of inclusivity and the nature of learning and teaching in an inclusive pedagogic environment. Sinclair's work on the structure of classroom discourse (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Sinclair & Brazil, 1982) pointed out that teachers typically made questions to which they knew the answers, and assessed the reply of students according to their preconceived expectations (Sinclair & Brazil, 1982:57).

Another important contribution of Bakhtin (1981) is the concept of *hybridization*. For Bakhtin (1981:358), '... language and languages change historically primarily by means of hybridization...a mixture of two social languages within the limits of a single utterance.' The dialogues that take place in a classroom, as heteroglossic forms of discourse, are hybrid. The students participating in an ongoing dialogue about inclusivity could talk through hybridization using utterances about inclusion appropriated from teachers of other social groups in their talk. How students talk to their peers depends not only on how they were taught in the classroom, but also on what they learned before their involvement in the inclusive educational environment. The type of activities students are involved in could also contribute to

the formation of specific discourses. For example, when teachers position students outside a group, then they formulate monologic (Bakhtin, 1984) rather than dialogic conditions, while the opposite might occur, when students are positioned in teams.

> Monologism, at its extreme, denies the existence outside itself of another consciousness with equal rights and equal responsibilities, another *I* with equal rights (*thou*). With a monologic approach (in its extreme or pure form) *another person* remains wholly and merely an object of consciousness, and not another consciousness. No response is expected from it that could change everything in the world of my consciousness. Monologue is finalized and deaf to the other's response...monologue manages without the other... (Bakhtin, 1984:292)

In monologicality, utterances are isolated from their social context, whereas in dialogicality, the various meanings of the utterances exist either in agreement or in opposition or are complementary, depending on the social factors of the context within which they are used (Bakhtin, 1981). For example, the position of students in groups is not sufficient to develop an interactive, dialogic environment, if students do not share the appropriate collaborative and dialogic repertoire.

3.3.3 Authoritative discourse/ internally persuasive discourse

Bakhtin (1986) and Voloshinov (1983) emphasise the connection between discourse and ideology, since each utterance is filled with content meaning and significance associated with ideology. Each person establishes an individual ideological consciousness through which the selective assimilation of the discourse of others is transferred and appropriated (Bakhtin, 1981). Individual expression is mainly the product of different voices and discourses connected to another voice through social language.

In fact language is learned through assimilating the voices of others in our communities through re-externalisation of modes of discourse. Assimilation is achieved in two ways which can be used at school: memorisation and the re-narration in our own words, that is, the 'double-voiced' narrative of the words of others. So, our language is learned through assimilating the voices of others in our communities through the re-externalisation of appropriated modes of discourse by using them. Bernstein's (1981) pedagogic practices focuses on the second way, since it involves various forms of appropriation as the words of others are transmitted according to the educational environment in which they are understood and valued.

Bakhtin (1981:345-346) stresses how the selective assimilation of the discourse of others is based on a struggle to determine the ideological interdependence of the world and our behaviour, that is, a struggle between the 'authoritative discourse' and the 'internally persuasive discourse'. Bakhtin emphasizes the relationship between individual conscience and the outside world through the power of language and dialogue within a subject-object dualism. The struggle and the

dialogic interrelationship of these two categories of ideological discourse usually determine the history of an individual ideological consciousness. Internally persuasive discourse is for Bakhtin (1981:348) a subjective struggle with the 'alien discourse', the internally persuasive discourse from which the individual wants to be liberated.

> The importance of struggling with another's discourse, its influence on the history of an individual's coming to ideological consciousness, is enormous. One's own discourse and one's own voice ...will sooner or later begin to liberate themselves from the authority of the other's discourse. This process is made more complex by the fact that a variety of alien voices enter into the struggle for influence within an individual's consciousness.

In terms of power relations, the 'authoritative discourse' (Bakhtin, 1981) refers to the voice of authority, i.e. teachers, parents, a voice which is fixed and cannot be negotiated. The 'internally persuasive discourse' refers to current personal beliefs about the world. It could be said that the evaluative aspect of language use affects the way students are socialised through talk to the values and beliefs in their classroom and, at the same time, shows how their talk reflects the beliefs and values of their classroom. The struggle between both forms of discourse is illustrated by the tension that exists when students make an evaluation about the identification and positioning of their peers with SEN based on their own views and the values of their environment, giving an individual and social dimension to their evaluation. Children's social backgrounds are part of their particular evaluations about how to act on the world. Bakhtin sees talk as conveying the intentions of previous speakers and the insinuations of their former contexts of use.

3.4 Bernstein's views and my study

In this section, I explain why Bernstein's theories form part of the theoretical framework of this study and how specific concepts helped me to begin to think about and answer the main question of my research. It seems that discourse develops ideologies and constructs identities. But since the aim of this study is to investigate how a particular identity is constructed, the student identity, I encountered various approaches to discourse and glosses of *identity*. I needed to adopt a particular dimension of student identity for the data analysis, and to make visible the categories and symbols through which it was defined. According to Bernstein (2000:62) pedagogic identity has

> a social base and a career. The social base is the principles of social order and desires, institutionalised by the state in its educational system. The career is moral, knowledged and locational. ...identity is the embedding of a career in a social base.

According to Althusser (1983) the school is an ideological mechanism for reproducing the existing power relations and ideology of the prevailing society and

its values. Discourse, consequently, has an ideological function. Understanding the ideology that constructs student identity and how it does this could contribute to effective inclusion for students with SEN in mainstream schools today, closely relates to the aim and the broader theoretical framework of this study. Foucault's view of discourse refers to power-knowledge which is directly related to the process of subjectification and identity construction (During, 1992). Ideology is identified with discourse and knowledge does not derive from a subject but from power relations.

However, Bernstein's theory of discourse (1990) is more closely associated with education. Bernstein's pedagogic work gave me access to the theoretical issues of ideology and symbolic control in education, that the choice of school knowledge is a social and political process governed by a variety of relationships, within the scope of school knowledge and social reality, with consequences for teaching, teachers and students. Bernstein (1990:135) refers to pedagogical discourse, within his theory of codes and cultural reproduction. 'These codes of discourse, ways of relating, thinking and feeling, specialize and distribute forms of consciousness, social relations and dispositions.'

The theoretical origins of Bernstein date back to Marxism and Foucault, though he states his work is significantly different (Bernstein, 1990:134). He argues that power relationships relate to discourse through the operation of the symbolic control carried out through agencies and agents, such as education and teachers. Symbolic control is realized through discourses, one of which is pedagogic discourse, which is

> a principle for appropriating other discourses and bringing them into a special relation with each other for the purposes of their selective transmission and acquisition (Bernstein, 1990:183-184).

Thus, the pedagogic discourse is somehow the articulation of other discourses and their special relationship within a certain context according to rules which distribute, recontextualize and evaluate them (Bernstein 1990: 183-185). Pedagogic discourse is a kind of 'imaginary' discourse, which constructs 'imaginary' subjects (Bernstein, 1990:184). For example, imaginary subjects are projected by different pedagogic modes and their discourses in terms of recognition and realisation rules, i.e. time, space, ability groupings, material culture, assessment and interaction between students and between teachers and students, integrate specific student identities (Bernstein, 1996).

Bernstein's thesis for me is a theoretical structure through which to interpret both micro- and macro-sociological events and the process through which discipline is 'introjected' (Bernstein, 1996:32) into individuals and to society within a context where linguistics meets with semiotics.

Althusser and Foucault's (1979, 1981) approach to the formation of the subject and to the construction of discipline as school is understood as a 'disciplinary institution'. Bernstein (1989:181-183) refers to the transmission of specific forms of culture

through education, thereby reproducing existing class structures. Social identities are formed through the internalisation of the classifications of age, gender and social class. Social practices and the codes that govern them construct subjects by distributing different forms of subjectivity. The role of schools through which students internalise the norms for maintaining social order, relate to the hidden curriculum, which 'is explored primarily through the social norms and moral beliefs tacitly transmitted through the socialization process that structure classroom social relationships' (Giroux, 1983:48). According to Skelton (1997), the hidden curriculum is not instantiated only into the curriculum. Its messages are conveyed to students through pedagogy.

> The hidden curriculum is that set of implicit messages relating to knowledge, values, norms of behaviour and attitudes that learners experience in and through educational processes. These messages may be contradictory, non-linear and punctuational and each learner mediates the message in her/his own way. (ibid: 188)

Skelton's study is placed within the paradigm of the 'New Sociology of Education' (Young, 1971) and focuses on the life of school and the educational processes which develop within this context. The New Sociology of Education is not concerned with the structure and organisation of the educational system but the educational processes and knowledge provided by educational mechanisms. By adopting a micro-sociological approach, the focus is on the life and operation of school, mainly on the dialectical relationship between teachers and students (Blackledge & Hunt, 2000). The 'New Sociology of Education' is the convergence between the sociology of education and the sociology of knowledge and questions the nature of objectively defined reality and the social neutrality of knowledge. It addresses the social criteria through which knowledge is transmitted, acquired and evaluated (Bernstein, 1990:166). The new sociology is concerned with the methods of symbolic interaction and phenomenology in order to present school reality as being socially constructed and pedagogical subjects as actors participating in the construction of their experience of school. Issues of school reality, such as school failure, are examined in relation to the patterns of communication between teachers and learners, the expectations and the development of social categories by teachers.

As the unit of study and analysis of everyday reality is central, there is a need for the observation, recording and analysis of empirical data regarding the concept of order, teaching procedures, the enforcement of rules, the procedures for labelling an act or behaviour as disruptive, the process for developing educational categories of a good, bad, smart student, the informal processes for the integration of students in these categories and the teacher's expectations in relation to each category and the transmission of these expectations to students. Teaching, assessment, discipline, and pedagogy are not seen, within this theoretical position, as homogeneous and stable elements of school reality. The form they take, the experiences they promote, and the pedagogical identities they impose vary depending on the participants and the meanings that participants attribute to social situations as they arise in the classroom.

The French sociologist Bourdieu was among the first to stress the importance of culture and how it affects education (Blackledge & Hunt, 1995). He showed how the educational system mediates social and cultural reproduction. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) claim two types of culture interact in school: the legitimate culture of the school, which is a variant of the culture of the dominant social groups, and the diverse cultures that each child has acquired effortlessly from their family. Children from the dominant strata are familiar with the culture of the school and can more easily meet its requirements and succeed. In contrast, the children from non dominant backgrounds - farmers, blue collar workers, etc. - experience a different type of culture and face significant problems. According to Bourdieu, the chances a child has to meet the requirements of school depend on the culture or, as he calls it, the 'Cultural capital' that she has inherited from her family and the immediate social environment. If inclusion is to be a level playing field, priority should be placed on the encouragement of the active participation of all pupils, particularly those not gifted by their families with the dominant cultural capital, in discourses and practices with collaborative interactions to bridge the culture gap. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) argued that the legitimisation of the culture of dominant social groups by the school and the lack of respect for different cultures or diversity imposes on pupils and affects their performance in school and the perceptions that shape themselves and others. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) characterise this enforcement of views as 'symbolic violence', an 'arbitrary' imposition 'of meanings', i.e., perceptions, interpretations and evaluations.

Bernstein, in the late 1950s, began to develop concerns around language and its role in the school performance of students. Bernstein's views differed from Bourdieu's concerning the particular emphasis placed on communication between individuals, which contains implicitly the key role of culture of each student determined by the social and cultural environment. Language is a key element of cultural capital. For Bernstein, language as a code is transmitted and acquired through culturally specific interactions that the school legitimised in a particular form (Bernstein, 1973). The legitimate language of the school represented what Bernstein called the 'elaborated code' of communication, and is different from the 'restricted code' (Bernstein, 1973), which many students encounter either during the first years of schooling or later because of differences in the social or cultural environment. The restricted language code differs from the elaborated in terms of its syntactic structure and functioning, i.e. the people who use it could not move comfortably into another culture of communication with more elaborated forms of expression to address more complex situations in learning (Kokkotas, 2004). Language is central when education has to meet the diverse needs of students from various social and cultural environments. Participation in cooperative, interactive activities could lead to facility with more elaborate codes in communication. The existence of such opportunities would suggest that inclusion is supported at classroom level, and their absence, that it is not, or not for all children.

At the core of Bernstein's (1991) theory of cultural reproduction is the construction of educational knowledge and its transmission, that is, the construction of

pedagogic practices. According to Solomon (1991), the central problem in Bernstein's theory is how regulated class relationships of power and principles of social control govern various social practices that develop at different levels and in various agencies of cultural reproduction, i.e. institutions, thereby regulating the consciousness of the subject. The concepts of power and control, which are mutually interwoven, are central to his theory. In Bernstein's theoretical model, every aspect of social reality is governed by power relations. Bernstein deals with the field of symbolic control as a means of cultural reproduction.

Singh (2002) claims that Bernstein's theoretical model offers the opportunity to name the various aspects of pedagogical practice in sociological terms, such as the selection and organisation of the knowledge transmitted in the curriculum for different educational levels, the division of labour in education, the relationship between teachers and/or students, the pedagogical methods and their application. Furthermore, the concepts emerging from his theory offer the possibility of developing a penetrating and multidimensional sociological description, analysis and interpretation of the forms, outcomes and transformations of educational reality. His theory of knowledge applies to each level, i.e. official, pedagogical, local, and is also part of the macro-level or

> macro-structural level of analysis...government policies...impact directly on the work of educators and the conditions of students' learning...meso-level of...curricula and course designed in accordance with these policies... [and]... micro level or micro-interactional level of analysis (Bernstein, 2000:100)

My study goes beyond the micro level of interactions in the classroom to the macro level of interactions between the specific communicative classroom environment and the broader social institutions and structures to reveal how social asymmetries, power hierarchies and ideological models which lead to the marginalisation of certain groups are reproduced and/or challenged through the communicative events, practices and discourses produced in the local communities of classrooms. It is not enough to focus only on the quality of interactions in the classroom. There is the need to examine the interrelationships and the intertextual relations between the structures of a range of discourses developed in the classroom and the wider social practices that prevail in these discourses, interrelations which are often hidden and implicit, yet crucial to the establishment of specific semiotic patterns in the classroom and therefore, co-responsible for the establishment of specific learning contexts and access opportunities within the setting of the classroom.

The examination of discourse and social practices in schools can reveal how students with special educational needs are positioned and repositioned as subjects by different discourses. My emphasis is on activities in the classroom and social practices which relate to the broader social structure co-created by the actors. Actors use mediating tools such as the curriculum, teaching practices and messages implicitly and explicitly expressed, for the negotiation of social meanings and the construction of identities. Bernstein's (1990, 1996, 1999, 2000) theoretical

framework supports the analysis and description, of agents and agencies in the education system and the educational processes and their forms in classroom interaction through which knowledge is transmitted, constructed and transformed into school knowledge. His theory links the structural level with the interactional level, the pedagogic discourse with the agents and types of resources through which discourse is constructed. The impact of these interrelations on the positioning and identification of children with SEN in different classrooms is explored.

The key concepts of Bernstein's theories relating to the interests, rationale and structure of this study will be discussed next, power and symbolic control, pedagogic discourse, recontextualization, classification, and framing, and visible and invisible pedagogical practices. A more general approach to his theoretical framework is required to formulate a more holistic picture of the phenomenon under study.

3.4.1 Bernstein's theoretical framework

Key concepts of Bernstein's theory are presented to develop a complete picture for understanding and interpreting sign-making beyond the verbal interactions between the teacher and students. The social factors affecting the students' positioning and identification in the classrooms are looked at. The rules and the relations of power and control which underpin sign making in the classrooms are discussed. The question of how pedagogic discourses are used as a tool for mediating the pedagogic practices is considered in order to understand how students with SEN are positioned within this framework.

3.4.1.2 The concepts of power and symbolic control

Power and control are central concepts in Bernstein's work (1990). Although the two concepts differ, they are empirically embedded in one another. According to Bernstein (2000) power relations create, legitimize and reproduce boundaries between different categories of groups - gender, class, race - different categories of discourse and different categories of agency. This means that power is always associated with the relationship between categories. In contrast, social control establishes legalised forms of communication appropriate for different categories. In summary, power builds relations between given forms of interaction and control builds relations within these forms (Bernstein, 2000). Bernstein (1990:133) starts from the distinction between the social division of labour in the field of production and the social division of labour in the field of symbolic control, exploring their relationship with education, which produces and reproduces these two forms of social division. The field of symbolic control relates to 'the new professions which regulate mind, body, social relations, their special contexts and temporal projections'. Bernstein (1990) defines symbolic control as,

> the means whereby consciousness is given a specialized form and distributed through forms of communication which relay a given distribution of power and dominant cultural categories. Symbolic

> control translates power relations into discourse and discourse into power relations. I may add, it can also transform those very power relations. (p.134)

Symbolic control is facilitated through implicit assumption and explicit teaching within the context of social interaction. Symbolic control is realised under special arrangements, time classifications, ritual contexts, and specialised discourses, while its deep structure is found at a level, which relates to the transformation of emotion and desire (Bernstein, 1990). Bernstein's (1990) model offers the potential for change as according to his theory,

> Symbolic control which inscribes the legitimate, translates power into discourse, and discourse into modalities of culture may well unwittingly also be the guardian of the possibility of the new. There is a paradox at the heart of symbolic control. Control cannot control itself, any more than discourse can control discourse. Symbolic control, always a condition for someone else's order, carries within itself the potential for transforming the order of the imposing other. (p.159)

3.4.1.3 Pedagogic device, pedagogic discourse and the concept of recontextualization

Bernstein's (2000) underlying 'pedagogic device', is a set of rules or procedures through which knowledge is transformed into pedagogic communication (Singh, 2002). The pedagogic device sets up the internal logic of pedagogic discourse, and is the condition for the production, reproduction and change of dominant culture (Bernstein, 2003). The pedagogic discourse, which comprises the principles of recontextualization, constitutes the rules of the specialized communication through which pedagogic subjects are selectively formed. Bernstein's pedagogic discourse is incorporated into his theory of codes and cultural reproduction. 'These codes of discourse, ways of relating, thinking, and feeling, specialize and distribute forms of consciousness, social relations, and dispositions' (Bernstein, 1990:135).

Foucault (1970) argues that subjects are undergoing a process of 'objectification', a form of subjugation of the subject that is brought by certain forms of power, which for Foucault constitute products of discourse produce knowledge which increases the power of individuals. Knowledge is an authority in discourse production, since it constrains discourse through the rules it is submitted to. The constraints imposed refer to the number of speakers and their skills necessary to engage in discourse. Discourse provides the context for people to understand their experiences and relationships with others and is a central part of power. The different kinds of discourse which are shaped by the social practices within social institutions construct corresponding behaviours which serve the power relations of each society (Burr, 1995:72-73). Foucault (1970) refers to the underlying process of subordination through knowledge-power 'discipline'. Their discourses and practices construct 'disciplinary subjects'. In view of the subject, Foucault recognises as central the concept of power and of the technologies of power which are activated in the

context of the disciplinary institutions. Foucault agrees with Althousser on the construction of the subject through the discourse and its practices (Youdell, 2006:41).

Bernstein (1990) argues that power relations are related to discourse through symbolic control, which is enabled through agencies and agents, such as education and teachers. Symbolic control is realized through discourses, one of which is pedagogic discourse,

> a principle for appropriating other discourses and bringing them into a special relation with each other for the purposes of their selective transmission and acquisition (Bernstein, 1990: 183-184).

In this study, the positioning and identification of students with SEN is partly a pedagogic discourse within which other discourses are incorporated, such as the discourses of educational policies, of the curriculum, of special provision and the various discourses relating to society, family, socialisation, justice, equality, diversity, discrimination. These discourses are not transferred directly from the field in which they were produced and function, but selected and modified according to rules that evaluated their content, i.e. what is good, useful, representative, fair, inclusive, rules that selected specific characteristics of these discourses, and rules that decontextualized, 'delocated' these characteristics from their primary context and recontextualized, 'relocated' (Bernstein, 1990:184) them in the ways in which students with SEN are positioned and identified.

The main process of structuring and organising the pedagogic device is the process of 'recontextualization', a concept that describes and interprets the transmission of knowledge through processes of selection from the predefined fields within which knowledge is produced, towards the defined areas of education where knowledge is 'reproduced'. The process of recontextualization is not simple and cannot be presumed in the sense that since,

> symbolic formations were specific to a context with its specializing practices...conditioned by a society's regulative or moral order...If recontextualization totally severs any relation, then how is specialized knowledge ever reproduced? (Muller, 2007:80)

Bernstein makes a distinction between the message, that is, what is transmitted, and the grammar of the pedagogic device, that is, the means of transmitting the message. The main activity of the recontextualizing field is to establish the categories, content and relations which are the subject of transmission (what) and the way pedagogic discourse is transmitted (how) (Bernstein, 1977:116). According to Bernstein (1990:192), there are two levels of recontextualization, the 'official pedagogic recontextualizing field' and the 'pedagogic recontextualizing field'. The first refers to the formal state institutions and agencies at central, regional or local level. It includes the official rules which regulate the production, distribution, reproduction, and the change of educational *text*, i.e. the agents of symbolic control

who 'market' the text and have power over it, that is, State control, and its relationship with other pedagogic texts, the social relations and practices of its transmission and acquisition and the development of their organizational contexts. The official recontextualizing field is responsible for the development, maintenance and change of the official pedagogic discourse. The meaning of 'text' is defined by Bernstein (1990:137) as the product of the agents of symbolic control.

The second field, the 'pedagogic recontextualizing field' refers to the institutions and factors that operate in the educational system in general. The difference is that the first is regulated directly by the state. Textbooks do not reflect scientific knowledge per se but a school version that requires simplification of scientific concepts and processes and the transformation of knowledge influenced by perceptions about the nature of knowledge, the dominant pedagogic positions and the corresponding social choices. The transformation of scientific knowledge into school version knowledge is characterised by recontextualization. A second process of recontextualization occurs when the already recontextualized text is situated in the field of reproduction and becomes active in the pedagogic process. The principles of the second recontextualization might stem directly from the official pedagogic recontextualizing field or from the local school field (Tsatsaroni, 2001).

3.4.1.4 Code, Boundary, Classification and Framing

According to Bernstein (1977:203), formal educational knowledge can be considered to take place through three systems of meanings,

- the curriculum, which defines what, is considered valid knowledge.
- the pedagogy, which defines what is considered valid transmission of knowledge.
- and the evaluation, which defines what valid realisation of knowledge, is considered by the student.

The 'educational knowledge code' refers to the fundamental principles, which shape curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation. The curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation are realizations of the 'educational knowledge code'. Within a general definition of the code, it could be said that a code is, 'a regulative principle, tacitly acquired, which selects and integrates *relevant meanings*, the *form of their realization* and *evoking contexts*' (Bernstein, 1977:111). In this theory, the concept of code is intertwined with the concepts of legitimate and non legitimate communications and therefore, presupposes a hierarchy in the forms of communication, their delineation and criteria. In the theory of Bernstein, the codes are principles within which the class-regulated power relations and principles of social control are embedded. According to these principles, the appropriate 'meanings' are regulated, that is, are selected and combined, the forms through which they are realised and the contexts from which they emerge. The codes as regulatory principles are recruited by the subject

implicitly and regulate her behaviour and consciousness, while they position the subjects in unequal social relations (Solomon, 1991).

Bernstein (1977:204-205) distinguishes two types of curricula. If the contents are distinctively bounded and insulated from each other, then he calls this type of curriculum, 'collection type'. But if the contents are in an open relationship, then the type of curriculum is called 'integrated type'. Based on these types of curriculum, he establishes the concepts of classification and framing. 'Classification' is the strength of the boundary between different categories and refers to the power, which defines what can be put together with what, which forms a category, and how strong the distinction of a category from another is. 'Framing' is the strength of the boundary between the context and the non context, between what is and what is not acceptable in the context, and the strength of the boundary between discrete time units, which defines the structure of the processes of power and the strength of the boundary between different levels within the categories. The term classification does not refer to the contents but to the relations between the contents. Classification refers to the nature of differentiation between contents. Where classification is strong, the contents are well insulated from each other by strong boundaries. Where classification is weak, there is reduced insulation between contents, because the boundaries between the contents are weak or blurred. Therefore, classification indicates "the degree of boundary maintenance between contents" (Bernstein, 1977:88). Classification focuses on the strength of boundaries as the critical distinguishing feature of the division of labour of educational knowledge, and provides the basic structure of the message system that constitutes the curriculum (Bernstein, 1977).

According to Bernstein (1977), the concept of framing is used to determine the structure of the message system which is suggested by pedagogy. The term does not refer to the contents of pedagogy, but to the strength of the boundary between what can be transmitted and what cannot be transmitted in the pedagogic relationship. Where framing is strong, there is a visible boundary; where framing is weak, there is a blurred boundary between what can and what cannot be transmitted. Framing refers to the range of the choices, which are available to teachers and students in terms of control over what is transmitted and acquired in the pedagogic relationship. Strong framing leads to reduced options, whereas weak framing involves a range of options. Therefore, framing (p.206) is, 'the degree of control teacher and pupil possess over the selection, organization, and pacing of the knowledge transmitted and received in the pedagogical relationship.'

In Bernstein's theory (1996:31-32), the boundaries are social conventions and practices, which keep separate, in space and time, the social groups, the regions of knowledge, and the stages of the procedures. The materiality of the boundary does not really matter. Boundaries are symbolic, and as such they are perceived by the subject and so they are maintained and reproduced. The strength of the boundary, which is expressed by classification, as a component of the code, is therefore, a principle which is tacitly employed by the subject and regulates its behaviour and consciousness, according to 'recognition rules', i.e., about what belongs to where,

what goes with what and where the subject belongs, which is its position, identity and positioning within the web of power relations. In the same way, the strength of the boundaries, expressed by framing, is implicitly employed by the subject and regulates its behaviour and consciousness, according to 'realization rules', i.e., the rules about the form, which is acceptable for the processes to get within a context and the principles of social control which define them. According to Bernstein's theory, a radical and general change of boundaries means changing both the distribution and power relations and the principles of social control, thus changing class relations (Solomon, 1991).

This research employed the concepts of classification and framing in relation to the positioning and identification of students with SEN at different schools. Rigid classification of school time and strong framing of teaching suggested children with SEN were not allowed to maintain the pace of the mainstream classrooms. Where classification and framing was weaker and the pacing of teaching adapted to the needs of children, the boundaries, while still there, were more permeable. Weaker boundaries between the taught knowledge and the extra-curricular knowledge allowed the development of students' with SEN to participate more in the educational process and constructed more positive attitudes towards education.

According to Bernstein (1990), school transmits two types of knowledge, one which refers to abstract concepts and skills and the other, which refers to social order. Both types of knowledge are transmitted through pedagogic discourses. Pedagogic discourse is produced by the incorporation of the *instructional discourse* and the *regulative discourse*, with the first embedded in the latter. The *instructional discourse* refers to the transmission of knowledge and skills and their interaction, while the *regulative discourse* refers to issues of social order, relations and identity. The regulative discourse determines the selection, organisation, sequencing, pacing and criteria of evaluation. The regulative discourse defines the interaction practices between students and teachers and the instructional discourse has embedded regulative characteristics which affect the form of the instructional discourse. For instance, in the classroom when the instructional discourse is controlled by the teacher, then the regulative discourse might underline the position of the teacher as the authority in the classroom and the rules might be more explicit and authoritative. By contrast, when the student has more control over the ways knowledge and skills are transmitted, then the regulative discourse might be expressed with implicit and less hierarchical form with more control over interpersonal communication (Bernstein, 2000).

The instructional and regulative discourses reflect the distribution of power and control which could produce different pedagogic structures. Power relations are underlined by the principle of classification, where the degree of maintenance of boundaries between categories of agents, i.e. teachers, students, pedagogic discourses and contexts (Bernstein, 1996). Control refers to the social relations between different categories of agents, i.e. teacher/student, different categories of students, discourse and contexts, which are subject to framing and its principles of control over the selection, organisation, sequencing, pacing and criteria of the

communicative practices (Bernstein, 1975:89). Where framing is strong, the transmitter has more control over the criteria which regulate the communicative practices in the pedagogic relationship. Where framing is weak, the acquirer has explicit control over the organisation and the selection of criteria in the pedagogic relationship.

In this study, discourse is studied at a structural level and interactional level. The structural level reflects the division of labour. It refers to category relations and the degree of specialisation between the categories, according to which, depending on how strong or weak the insulation of boundaries between categories is, the principle of classification applies. There are *recognition rules*, which power relations produce and which differentiate contexts. The interactional level refers to the regulation of social relations, i.e. relations of transmission and acquisition between teachers and students.

In mainstream classrooms, there is specialised and non-specialised pedagogical content for students with and without SEN, which in a broader sense might reflect differences in the allocation of material resources in society. The study of the production of such differentiation might be helpful as it implies that differentiations of the ways in which knowledge is selected, transmitted, acquired and evaluated by students with SEN could be governed by social factors which reproduce social inequalities. For example, the power relations and principles of control established in a society could be reflected in the ways in which curriculum subjects and related activities are produced and differentially transmitted to children with SEN. According to Bernstein, this tends to develop a hierarchical structure which distinguishes the categories of students with SEN from their peers. In this way, students are positioned and position themselves in relation to the hierarchical structure.

Furthermore, the principles of classification and framing, which structure pedagogic discourses at the structural and interactional level, are analysed in order to identify modes of specialised instruction and communication that create a strong degree of insulation between the categories of students, i.e. high/low ability groups. However, non-specialised instruction and pedagogic communication in classrooms with activities might foster collaborative learning and incorporate different sources of school and everyday knowledge.

The Steiner classroom, which was selected in order to make contrast with the classrooms of the other two schools in the study, differentiated from the classrooms with stronger classification and framing, as was incorporated a variety of teaching and learning resources to all students to meet their needs. At the interactional level, the rules of framing which structure the pedagogic communication were more explicit and visible in the mainstream classroom, while in the Steiner classroom were more implicit or invisible. This is because symbolic control,

> translates power relations into discourse and discourse into power relations...consciousness is given a specialized form and distributed

> through forms of communication which relay a given distribution of power (Bernstein, 1990:134)

Bernstein's (1990) distinguishes between agencies which function in an economic field as opposed to agencies which function in the field of symbolic control; this function may be part of the public or the private sector. This study involves two state schools, and one private, independent school, which is under the control of a private educational enterprise. The private school could be seen as an agency in the economic field with some degree of autonomy as it is not under the control of the State and has 'symbolic control functions [and] ...power over the text...its form, content, context, possibilities, distribution'. The state school could be seen as an agency 'specializing in symbolic control operating in the field of symbolic control' with limited autonomy. It could be argued that the state school, as an agency in the field of symbolic control can 'regulate specialized discourses of communication...operate dominant discursive codes regulating social relations, consciousness, and disposition' (Bernstein, 1990:139). The strong/weak boundaries which distinguish the access of students with SEN to the curriculum subjects as opposed to their peers, and the implicit or explicit ways through which this is realised are symbolic modes through which the identities of students are distinguished and thus, allow exploration of the positions and practices which are available both to teachers and students.

3.4.1.5 Pedagogic practices, visible and invisible pedagogies

The meaning of pedagogic practice should be understood in terms of the social context through which cultural production and reproduction are implemented. Pedagogic practices are manifested in the communicative context of the classroom, reflect a micro level of analysis, and are formulated through the structural elements of the macro level. The most important elements are the socially structured and culturally dependent aspects of the ability of student groups; the form and the content of formal school knowledge are set up by the rules of recontextualization and the ideologically dependent pedagogic theory of the teacher.

In Bernstein's theory (1996:112), there are two kinds of pedagogy. First, the practice of *visible pedagogy*, which, as it is based on positivism and behaviourism, highlights specialised forms of knowledge and rigorous processes of transmission and evaluation and is characterized by strong classification and strong framing. The practice of *invisible pedagogy*, which is based on contemporary views of developmental and cognitive psychology, adopts the processes of knowledge acquisition and recognises in the child an autonomous course of learning and is characterized by less stringent classifications of content knowledge, which appears more flexible, and by instructional practices of knowledge acquisition, which evolve on the basis of a less hierarchical relationship between teacher and student and by less or more informal assessment practices.

Bernstein (2003) was especially interested in the practices of visible and invisible pedagogy. He examines pedagogic practice as a cultural transmitter as well as what

it retransmits. He developed a view of pedagogic practices, which were distinguished as conservative, traditional, progressive, or child-centred. In visible pedagogic practice, the rules of regulative order and of instructional order are explicit, while in invisible pedagogy, they are implicit. In visible pedagogic practices, emphasis is given to performance, on the product of the child, while 'invisible pedagogies focus upon the procedures/competences which all acquirers bring to the pedagogic context' and emphasise 'transmission-performance'. Therefore, briefly, according to Bernstein, invisible pedagogies highlight acquisition and competence, as opposed to visible pedagogies which value transmission and performance. It is worth noting that, according to Bernstein (2003:73-75), both visible and invisible pedagogies bear different social class assumptions, which children with specific social origins could take advantage of. For example, to the assumptions of a visible pedagogy is likely to correspond that part of the middle class, which is directly related to the economy through the 'production, distribution, and the circulation of capital' (p.74), while to the assumptions of an invisible pedagogy is likely to correspond that part of the middle class, which is directly related to symbolic control, located in the public sector' (p.74).

Bernstein directed his attention to the dependence of pedagogic practice on the market and to alternative forms of pedagogy which were independent of the market. According to Bernstein (2003:65-66), the pedagogic relationship can aid either cultural reproduction or cultural transformation. The essential logic of any pedagogic relationship derives from the relationship between the following three rules:

- 'Hierarchical rules', which refer to rules of conduct, social order and morality, and have become a prerequisite for appropriate behaviour in the pedagogic relationship, through which the transmitter must learn to be a transmitter and the acquirer, must learn to be an acquirer.

- 'Sequencing rules' which pertain to the process of transmission whereby something precedes and something follows, which means that there is a kind of progress. Any pedagogic practice must have sequencing rules, which entail pacing rules, that is, 'the rate of expected acquisition of the sequencing rules...'

- 'Criterial rules' pertain to criteria, which the acquirer is expected to attain and to implement in his own practices and in the practices of others. Criteria enable the acquirer to understand 'what counts as legitimate or illegitimate communication, social relation or position'. (ibid, 2003:65-66)

Moreover, educational knowledge is always governed by a form of 'elaborated code' (Bernstein, 1990) with which the children of middle class are familiar as opposed to children of the working class. Bernstein describes two ways through which students may adopt a positive orientation towards the context of school where the invisible pedagogies exist. The school might be identified either as similar to the context of home, where there is weak classification between the two, or as to its specialized

nature in opposition to that of home, with strong classification. An important factor here is the 'recognition rule'. The children of some social groups benefit, as they hold the symbolic equipment in order to behave effectively both at the progressive primary school and at the specialised school, where stringent selective mechanisms operate and classification and framing are strong. These children are the children of the 'new' middle class, the 'agents of symbolic control' (Bernstein, 1990:91). Children are able to recognise the difference between the different types of contexts, and to realise performances that meet the criteria of each context (Moore, 2004).

Changes in the official educational policy in different countries, including England, contributed to the development of Bernstein's theory (2000) of visible and invisible pedagogies, within which two contrasting models of pedagogic practice are distinguished, the *competence model* and the *performance model* identified in the contemporary linguistic, socio-political and educational contexts. The competence model focuses on the student rather than on knowledge, while it highlights the common elements of a group of learners and their similarities in terms of fundamental skills. The theories that support this model underline the diversity of individuals, even though the differences between students do not lead to obvious *stratification*. According to Bernstein (1990:73) *stratification* is explained in terms of social structure, power relations and symbolic control at micro and macro level and produces pedagogic practices with different social class assumptions. For example, pedagogic practices with strong classification and framing create the conditions for students with SEN to be stratified by ability and thus, to have unequal access to the curriculum compared to their peers. This way, the students with SEN 'are stratified within the schools and as groups within the society' (Sadovnik, 1995:14). In terms of their social logic, there is the assumption that all people are inherently able to gain knowledge and follow common procedures in the context of a 'universal democracy of acquisition', 'all are equal in their acquisition, all actively participate in their acquisition, creativity is intrinsic to becoming social' (Bernstein, 1990:90). In the competence model, 'people are creative and active in the formation of a valid intellectual world' (Bernstein, 2000:43). Based on the above, the competence model is invisible, what is internalised, while performance model is external and visible.

In the competence model (Bernstein, 1996:67), there are 'three competence modes', the 'liberal / progressive', the 'populist' and the 'radical'. All three aspects of the model indicate relations of similarity which underline the difference between the students and not the deficit, and contradict the processes which lead to stratification. They express a form of creativity-emancipation, and employ forms of invisible pedagogic practice, while all three are interested in developing and empowering individuals or groups. Moreover, all three competence modes are 'therapeutic and are directly linked to symbolic control' (Bernstein, 1996:68). Therefore, it appears that there are different modes of invisible pedagogy which depend on these diverse pedagogic/instructional theories that utilise, appear with features of weak classification and weak framing and result from specific ideologies.

According to Bernstein (1996:68-69), the 'performance model' emphasises the product of the learner, his skills and knowledge. This model highlights the differences between the students and promotes an instrumentalist and functionalist perception about knowledge. In the performance model, there are 'three performance modes', the 'singulars', the 'regional' and the 'generic':

- Singulars develop curricula that consist of different cognitive contents, which are drawn from the established sciences, and are bounded by strict boundaries and strict hierarchical relations.

- Regional, are recontextualized versions of the units, are organized into broad groups and exist in the interface between the units and the technologies that these units enable.

- Generic implies that curricula should develop broad and flexible skills to individuals to foster their future work and social life. Essentially, generic is oriented towards life experiences and work outside school and presupposes the functional analysis of those characteristics necessary to enable people to apply a skill, to carry out a practice and to perform their work in a specific task. Generic focuses on the acquisition of general skills that lead to the creation of a flexible and transportable stock rather than to specific performances, while the basic concept which links to the generic is the ability to get trained, the 'trainability' (p.73).

The underlying feature of the performance model is that it focuses on the skills which the student is not supposed to acquire or the absence of skills, emphasising the cognitive contents which need to be acquired and hence, on the teacher. This model favours, selects and legitimises instructional theories of learning, which are based on behaviouristic psychology and are individualistic in terms of their emphasis (Bernstein, 1996).

The relationship between education and inclusion is positioned in a difficult dialogue at macro level, between the educational policies on SEN and the institutionalised education and at micro level, between the pedagogy of mainstream classroom and the subjective experience of students with SEN of their positioning and identification by teachers and peers. In different classrooms, there are different pedagogies and discourses depending on varied degrees of power and control (Bernstein, 2000), which result in different positioning of students with SEN in terms of their inclusion. As Kalantzis and Cope (1999) argue,

> The transition from lifeworld to education is fundamentally a process of varying degrees of inclusion –whether you are on the train in the first place and how you're positioned if you are on it. (p.119)

This work does not intend to ignore the importance of social reality which is institutionally constructed. The reference of this work to the subjective experiences of the subjects and to the processes that make up reality in school, as experienced

by the subjects, does not dispute the fact that the institution remains the framework which regulates ways in which the experiences of the subjects are established. However, from the same institutional framework could arise diverse experiences of the subjects and different social practices through which the identity of the subject is affected could emerge. The need to study social structure, class, power, social conflict, the historicity of social phenomena should not be ignored, as micro-sociological research tends to become very often descriptive and thus, school reality and its formation seems to highlight subjective factors. Therefore, the issue is to develop a theoretical framework, which looks at both subjective and objective aspects of school reality and which will give the opportunity to explore how subjective meanings under certain circumstances affect the structure of school life and how the structures of social life shape and affect the identity of the subject.

In the following section, in order to achieve a contrast among classrooms with different pedagogic modes, I use Steiner's example of a progressive learning pedagogy, which may help illustrate Bernstein's theories and show how the different degrees of classification and framing (and the discourses consequently developed) contrast with the discourses of the classrooms of the two state schools.

3.5 Steiner in my study

Rudolf Steiner was a polymath - social reformer, architect, professor of philosophy - and literature known for his work on Goethe. He became a pioneer of the scientific research into the spirituality of the modern man of the 20th century. His background in the fields of history and culture, combined with his observations in life, gave the world the 'Waldorf education system', the term used in the USA for Steiner education. Steiner education in practice was used in this study to explore how pedagogy is produced and can be analysed through the lens of different modes of classroom activity, the different kinds of discourses produced through particular pedagogic resources, and how they generate pedagogic practices on behalf of the students in the classroom.

The aim in involving a Steiner classroom in my study was to contrast a range of different classrooms with diverse discourses where the curriculum and teaching practices, the spatial organisation of the classroom, the objects and furniture and the visual displays all have different kinds of impact on the meanings developed around the positioning and identification of students with SEN. Their various degrees of inclusivity could also be analysed.

Bernstein's (1990) theory of recontextualization provided the basis for analysing Steiner pedagogy, as it involved studying how knowledge is recontextualized in the pedagogic discourse of a Steiner classroom and the modes through which the acquisition of knowledge and understanding are realised as Steiner practices. Steiner's pedagogy incorporates a comprehensive and integrated approach to the development of the child and a curriculum that fosters the 'education of the whole child' through the development of the cognitive, emotional and ethical skills during different stages of childhood.

In my study, the implications of the children's development on the basis of the Steiner curriculum and the pedagogic discourses were studied in contrast to the conventional mainstream pedagogic activities and the multimodal resources which were organised in the pedagogies of the other schools. In this section, I wish to explore the educational implications of pedagogy for children deemed appropriate in terms of Steiner's work (Steiner, 1981).

> It is now planned that the Waldorf School will be a primary school in which the educational goals and curriculum are founded upon each teacher's living insight into the nature of the *whole* human being, so far as this is possible under present conditions. (Steiner, 1985)

In the primary school years, according to Steiner, the child's feelings are the main way of knowing the world. The child understands and approaches the world through the ways in which he feels and imagines. Logical concepts about the world develop. The development of the imaginative and conceptual skills of the child is one of the responsibilities of primary education.

The moral aspect of presenting the world to children through the content and form of specific images is another important aspect of the education of children (Steiner, 1981). According to Steiner (1966, Lecture IX) children proceed on the unconscious assumption that the world is moral and that it can be imitated. He refers to two examples, a story and a poem, with moral bases, which operate as mediators of morality to children.

> It is good therefore for the whole education up to the change of teeth and even beyond this age, that one should bear in mind this unconscious assumption that the world is moral.

Steiner also argues that the ethical and religious aspects of children's education are experienced through activities which promote love, interest for life tasks, respect and recognition of the worth of the developing child (Steiner, 2003). The aim of Steiner's educational system is to educate the child as a whole, 'head, heart and hands'. The curriculum balances academic, material, artistic and manual activities. The teacher of the Steiner method focuses on developing in each child a natural love for learning. For this purpose, free expression through the arts is promoted so that students can approach their academic courses with an inner urge to learn, disabling the system of extrinsic motivation through competitive tests and grades. The art of education based on anthroposophical knowledge (Steiner, 1994) is designed to cultivate the harmonious and healthy development of children's physical bodies. According to Steiner, children should learn to use all the natural forces and skills in their future lives.

> ...help them learn to use their physical powers and skills fully in later life. Waldorf education is based on the knowledge and confidence that life in

> general has the best chance of developing when allowed to develop freely and healthily. (Steiner, 2003:195)

The education that could realise and feed children's needs which derive from the development of their physical, mental and spiritual world, using appropriate methods and principles, could give children the opportunity to develop in a truly free way. This is the ultimate purpose of Steiner education. The ideal practice is for every teacher to stay with the same class for the first 8 years to learn in depth the personality and needs of each individual student. Specific activities, which in conventional schools are often classified as secondary, i.e. painting, music, gardening and foreign languages, are essential for effective Steiner schools. During the early years of education, the content of curricular subjects is transmitted to students through various forms of art, because, according to Steiner, children seem to respond better to art, rather than learning only through instruction and repetition. In the first five years, students do not use any school books.

> ...when a materialistic conviction leads people to try to extend this form of teaching to every conceivable thing, they forget there are other powers in the human being which must be developed, and which cannot be addressed through the medium of visual observation. For instance, there is the acquisition of certain things purely through memory that is connected to the developmental forces at work between the sixth or seventh and the fourteenth year of life (Steiner, 1985).

Waldorf education is deeply connected with the oral tradition. It typically begins with the teacher who narrates children fairy tales throughout the kindergarten and the first grade in school. The oral approach is used and characterises all the years of Waldorf education. The teaching of reading is facilitated and the ability of children is developed naturally. During the first grade, children explore the origins of the alphabet, finding out in the same way as the ancient ancestors, how the shape of each letter stems from a pictogram. Writing, through this process, develops the artistic nature of children and language learning is cultivated in a well-organized way. Children with special educational needs have abilities and/or skills, which in order to be cultivated, need the appropriate cognitive, social, emotional and educational conditions. Diverse teaching methods and teaching styles are used to prevent school failure, behaviour problems and isolation. In the classroom, teachers need to identify these children at risk and to evaluate learning processes, which are best tailored to their individual needs.

3.5.1 Multiple Intelligences and Steiner education

An educational environment which approaches the education of children holistically could be linked to the needs of children as reflected through 'multiple intelligences' (Gardner, 1993). Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences has broad implications for special education; 'As educators can begin to perceive children with special needs as whole persons possessing strengths in many intelligence areas... [and not to] work from a deficit paradigm-focusing on what students *can't* do' (Armstrong,

2009:149). The acceptance of the concept of 'multiple intelligences' leads to a more positive and balanced perspective of the capabilities and characteristics of each individual. It can enable understanding of and change in attitudes towards children with SEN. The concept of 'multiple intelligences' allows a holistic view of children with SEN. According to Gardner's (Veenema & Gardner, 1996:70) theory,

> not only do all individuals possess numerous mental representations and intellectual languages, but individuals also differ from one another in the forms of these representations, their relative strengths, and the ways in which (and ease with which) these representations can be changed.

According to this theory, there is a multidimensional view of intelligence, which refers to different abilities, skills and mental processes such as, visual-spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, linguistic, logical-mathematical and naturalist intelligence (Gardner, 1999).

> As most schools...have honoured a certain kind of mind-ideally one that combines language and logic-...individuals who favour other mental representations have received little honour (Veenema & Gardner, 1996:70).

This approach allowed me in the context of this study to focus on the distinct abilities, weaknesses and needs of each child as a unique personality. Steiner realised his developmental approach to education in the form of an inclusive pedagogy incorporating 'transformative learning'. Transformative learning holds a systemic or integral worldview (Taylor, 1998). The systemic, integral approach to education includes the integration of the mental, emotional, physical and spiritual properties in the learning process (Aurobindo, 1990).

3.5.2 Anthroposophy and Steiner

The term *anthroposophy* derives from the Greek *anthropos* (man) and *sophia* (wisdom). Steiner developed a particular scientific method through which a person could investigate himself in terms of spiritual worlds. Steiner applied his theories of the deep aspects of existence and of the essential nature of human beings, in many practical fields, e.g. therapeutic education for mentally and emotionally handicapped people, bio-dynamic agriculture and gardening, and finally, anthroposophical medicine and pharmacy.

Although anthroposophy has formed, to a large extent, the theoretical basis of the method of teaching in Steiner schools, its philosophy is not taught to students. Steiner characterised his spiritual scientific method, *Anthroposophy* (Steiner, 1943), as he first started with Theosophy, a way of understanding the human being. He continued exploring the human riddle from different perspectives as he was both a researcher and author in philosophy and the theory of science. He extended the scientific method for studying the profound characteristics of human existence. He explained his spiritual scientific method as,

> ...it seeks to gain objective and accurate results on the subject of the supersensible world by means of the strictly controlled training of pure psychic vision. (Steiner, 1943:5)

Anthroposophy approaches the whole human being as body, soul, and spirit (Steiner, 1970). It is purely a research method and does not connect to a predetermined set of principles or rules. Moreover, it is not involved in matters of faith or religious confession as it is not a religion or a religious substitute. As spiritual research, it aims to expand the consciousness of man, regardless of any religious doctrine. The spiritual world needs to be realised through the eyes of the soul and through the spiritual organs of perception, which people acquire with effort and spiritual exercise. The same applies to knowledge and basic skills, which are transformed into higher skills, i.e., 'insight, inspiration and intuition' (Steiner, 1966). The development of these skills leads to anthroposophy.

The fruits of intellectual inquiry are used for improving pedagogy, the deepening of medical science, biology and nutrition, the renewal of farming methods, e.g. biodynamic agriculture, the promotion of a broader concept of art, painting, music, architecture, eurhythmy, 'a visible speech in which...certain movements either alone or in groups' (Steiner, 1985:105) are carried out, and the establishment of an organic social and economic structure, i.e. the social triptych, which refers to the cultural, legal and economic aspects of the social organisation. Therefore, anthroposophy is not only a personal path of self-knowledge, but creates simultaneously a social field within which all practical activities are developed, both for the evolution of human society, and of the spiritual world.

Steiner (1943) explains that his intention is not to prove but to prepare people to think about their existence and he refers to Goethe's friend, Knebel, who discusses the causes or impulses that determine human life, as, 'it entails an inner effort that can make us unbiased and receptive to facts we would simply take for foolish without it.' (p.91). Furthermore, human is interwoven in a threefold way in the world (Steiner, 1981). One aspect is when the individual finds the world before him and accepts it as a reality. The second aspect is when he makes the world his own case and as something that matters to himself. The third aspect refers to the goal he sets in the world which struggles to achieve ceaselessly. In this way, the individual is attached to the three aspects of the world and has three sides in his entity, the 'body, soul and spirit' (Steiner, 1981).

> By body is here meant that through which the things in the environment of a man reveal themselves to him...By...soul is signified that by which he ...which he experiences pleasure and displeasure, desire and aversion, joy and sorrow in connection with them. By spirit is meant what becomes manifest in him when as Goethe expressed it, he looks at things as a "so to speak divine being". (Steiner, 1994:24)

Only when the individual is observed from these three sides, then his entity might be fully understood because the three aspects show to people the threefold way through which he relates his entity to the rest of world. The teacher, in order to work in the right way, should take into account the triptych and its aspects which develop at different ages and in different ways.

Between seven and nine years, the teacher should focus on the evolving world of feelings of his students. It is very important for teachers to acquire the ability to guide children through the sensitive transitional stages that characterise this period (Steiner, 1996). The relationship with the teacher involves the desire of the child to imitate the teacher as, according to Steiner, this is a way through which children could experience in the physical world what they experienced in their spiritual life before the change of teeth.

> ...the human being before the change of teeth is entirely involved in the past. It is for this reason that he gives himself up to his environment by imitating the people around him. (Steiner, 1966, Lecture IX)

Consistent with Steiner's 'anthroposophy', is the curriculum, which meets the developmental stages of childhood and fosters children's imagination. The developmental stages are explained by Steiner (1985) analytically,

> From birth to about the sixth or seventh year...the child's soul becomes open to take in consciously what the educator and teacher gives, which affects the child as a result of the teacher's natural authority...in the sixth or seventh year... the sense of self...awakens in the child...By the end of the ninth year...has come into human life through the growth of civilization...Around the twelfth year...he becomes ripe for the comprehension of things... the mineral kingdom, the physical world, meteorological phenomena...at the age of fourteen or fifteen will not lack comprehension of important things in agriculture and industry, commerce and travel...a knowledge of things and a practical skill that will enable him to feel at home...

Steiner's schools try to meet the needs of children, not the demands of governments and economic agents, so Steiner created schools that would encourage creativity and free thinking. According to his autobiography (Steiner, 1928), the cultural context within which the Waldorf pedagogy is situated has to do with man's place in modern industrial society. Steiner was born on February 27, 1861. He lived with his family in Pottsbach, near the border of Hungary. One element in his life, which played a role throughout his development, was when he first came into contact with a different world than that observed with the natural senses. The training methods and teaching which he experienced during his childhood and adolescence differed radically from those he founded, as he explained. Throughout his study period in Austria, the experience which he values as the most important to him was teaching others. The anthroposophical activity of Rudolf Steiner gave impetus to the 'movement of the triptych of society' in 1919 and

as a result of this action the 'free Waldorf school' was established in Stuttgart for the children of workers and employees of the cigarette factory Waldorf – Astoria. Steiner proved that his efforts were not addressed to a limited social stratum, but to people of all social classes. This brief overview may help to illuminate a particular aspect of the pedagogy of Rudolf Steiner: The impetus given is based on deep and direct practical experience. The nature of the pedagogic practices involved in his philosophy of education offers this study the opportunity to look at alternative, more spiritual-based pedagogy that could encourage the students' with SEN equal participation to education.

3.5.3 The child's changing consciousness according to Steiner

Steiner's (1996) pedagogy takes seriously into account the course of development of the child and, for this reason, teaching is adapted to each stage of consciousness. During the first seven years, the child is entirely a 'sense organ' (Steiner, 1996: xiii). Everything goes through the child's body and is very sensitive to the impressions of the outside world. The motion is very important and its development determines the development of other functions, of speech:

> ...we have introduced eurhythmy, this visible speech in which, by carrying out certain movements either alone or in groups, the human being actually reveals itself just as it reveals itself through speech...The arts of music, painting and sculpting will be given a proper place in the scheme of instruction... (Steiner, 1985:105)

Until the change of the teeth, the element of will dominates the whole body of the child and remains active until about nine years, that is, the first three grades of primary school. The child has imagination, and the teacher should use this imagination through artistic work but without providing any cognitive explanations, which the child cannot understand (Steiner, 1996). The artistic element must exist in everything. The child can develop writing and reading skills through painting and art. After these skills have been both linked through art, then the first contact of the child with arithmetic is developed. All this must comprise a unity. Music and craft can play an important role because the child responds spontaneously to them. During this period, children need to learn both about the organic and the inorganic world, in imaginative ways, where the world is presented in human terms. For example, a child would understand better if 'we can speak about the plant world in terms of hair growing out of the Earth' (Steiner, 1996:101). Moreover, Steiner (1966, Lecture IX) explains the role of art in fitting in to the beautiful nature of the world, which children appreciate unconsciously.

> This unconscious assumption of the child that the world is beautiful is not met by the regulations laid down for "object lessons," regulations ...from a utilitarian point of view...try and immerse oneself in artistic experience so that the teaching in this period may be artistic through and through...

According to Steiner (1995:32) between the ages of 9-12 years old, the child is receptive to any format of image, i.e. drawing, painting, imagination, and pictures. Until about the age of nine, the child wants to participate in creating images and for this reason, every activity in the classroom must develop images. Between nine and ten years old, the typical child creates imaginative pictures. During that time, the subjects of botany and zoology are introduced through drawings which children visualise imaginatively.

> ...between the change of teeth and puberty you must educate out of the very essence of imagination...The sense organs do not think; they perceive pictures, or rather they form pictures from the external objects...in your teaching you must work in pictures, in images. (Steiner, 1995:23)

Another important element is that the teacher should avoid rigid and entrenched perceptions which could imprison the child's thinking and impact on the child's soul; instead, they should develop ideas and concepts, which are flexible and adaptable. Furthermore, between nine to ten years old, children instinctively and unconsciously confront in some way the distinction between themselves and the outer world. The child's knowledge about his position in relation to the outer world is something not experienced consciously but through internal concerns.

> ...between the ninth and tenth year human beings come to the point of discriminating between the self as subject and the outer world as object. There is now the distinction between the self and the surrounding world ...from the tenth year until toward the twelfth year you should awaken these thoughts... Thereby the children can take their place in the world in a very definite way, with their whole life of body, soul, and spirit. (Steiner, 1985:48-49)

So far, the child knows about the world through his teacher, but now the child wants to see the world beyond his teacher's position. All these things cannot be explained to children, in the present state of consciousness, as 'the concept of causality does not exist in the minds of children' (Steiner, 1996:109). What has been tested vigorously in the soul does not need any proof and, since art speaks directly to the soul, through a teacher's help, answers can be given to children's needs. Steiner (1966, Lecture IX) says about consciousness, within which the human being is ready to experience the true nature of the things around him/her, that it

> ... must be present in order that one may experience the beauty of the world... one must first seek to discover the state of consciousness through which man places himself in such a relationship to the world that things and facts reveal their being to him.

Meanings from the cultural environment are mediated through the anthroposophical approach to pedagogy, the materialised approach to pedagogy through objects and lessons, -Art, Craft- which make them accessible to students'

consciousness in a Steiner classroom. The meanings in Steiner's pedagogy are explored. The unity of intellect, emotion, and will in imaginative, artistic activities and the education of children through the incorporation of sound, tone, stories, poetry, music, movement, craftwork, painting, and contact with nature and other people characterise the pedagogy and the curriculum and incorporate meanings from a range of modalities, which need to be studied in order to understand how students are positioned and position themselves in relation to these meanings.

For example, Eurhythmy (1985) is an art which resembles dance and in which music or speech is expressed through body movements. Specific movements correspond to particular notes or sounds. It is also called 'visual discourse' or 'visual song'. Eurhythmy enhances synchronization and improves hearing. When children feel they are members of an orchestra and have to maintain a clear relationship in space with the other members, it is argued that social empowerment is achieved. In addition to the pedagogical value of eurhythmy, it is also used as a curative approach and as a form of art. Eurhythmy is an essential part of Steiner's curriculum. Children respond to simple rhythms and exercises, a process that enables them to strengthen and harmonize the body with the vital forces. In later stages, older children acquire through eurhythmy, poetry, drama and music, drawing in this way a deeper understanding of the compositions and of literary texts.

3.6 Summary

As my own research study is an attempt to analyse the interactions between children with special educational needs and their peers as constructed in the classroom and with reference to their inclusion, my aim will be to discover how identity and positioning are constructed for children with special educational needs through different discourses and what forms these take. The theoretical framework which I will use derives from these differing preceding parameters and includes the various theoretical fields, particularly Kress' and van Leeuwen's theory of multimodality, Bakhtin's dialogism and social languages, Bernstein's symbolic control, his view of recontextualization, classification and framing, and Steiner's pedagogic philosophy as a contrast to the educational approach in mainstream education. These theoretical fields are interconnected and support the methodological aspect, responding to questions of ways in which discourse is established in the classroom, what kind of elements/signs characterise discourse, and ways in which the identities of students are constructed through discourse.

CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH PROCESS, METHODOLOGY and METHODS

4. Introduction

This chapter explains how the methodology and methods used developed alongside the data collection and research process due to the nature of the research. In some instances, topics in this description are revisited to incorporate new features. The methodological choices made, and the selection of various qualitative methods, are based on my interpretive/constructivist paradigmatic stance. The methods - interviews, observations, multimodal analysis of classrooms - were applied in the context of qualitative methodology. To answer the question in my study I used a multiple case study design, specifically, three primary school case studies. After discussing the research questions, I refer analytically to the qualitative methods of semi-structured interviews and focus groups, participant observation and the multimodal exploration of verbal and non-verbal cues in the classroom environments. The multi-methodological approach of this study, its ethics, objectivity, validity, reliability and limitations is discussed.

4.1 Research process-Sequence of events

Table 4.1 summarises the research events and indicates the sections where the related methods, methodology, procedures or other issues are detailed.

***Table 4.1* Overview of the data collection and analysis during the research process**

Date/ order	Place	Research activity	Method/procedure	Section
1. February-mid-May 2010	**Sunny Hill**	Classroom observations	Field notes	5.3.2.1 5.3.2.3 5.3.4.1 5.3.4.3 5.8.2 5.8.3.1 5.8.5.1
2. mid February-mid May 2010		In-lesson verbal interaction tape recorded conversations	Transcribed to see language of positioning	5.3.2.4 5.3.4.4
3. early April 2010		Data on teachers and teaching assistants' views	Interviews, transcription	5.3.1 5.3.4.2 5.7.1 5.8.2 5.8.4
4. mid April 2010		Focus groups with students with and without SEN	Structured interview, transcriptions	5.8.3.2 5.8.5.2
5. mid April-mid May 2010		Visual displays, non-verbal stimuli	Photographs	5.3.2.1 5.3.2.2 5.3.4.1 5.3.4.2
1. February-mid-May 2010	**Panoptical Heights**	Classroom observations	Field notes	5.4.2.1 5.4.2.3 5.9.2.1
2. mid February-mid May 2010		In-lesson verbal interaction tape recorded conversations	Transcribed to see language of positioning	5.4.2.4
3. early April 2010		Data on teachers and teaching assistants' views	Interviews, transcription	5.4.1 5.4.2.3 5.9.1
4. mid April 2010		Focus groups with students with and without SEN	Structured interview, transcriptions	5.9.2.2
5. mid April-mid May 2010		Visual displays, non-verbal stimuli	Photographs	5.4.2.1 5.4.2.2
1. mid May- end of October 2010	**Nova Spectrum**	Classroom observations	Field notes	5.5.2.1 5.5.2.3 5.10.1 5.11.1
2. mid June- end of July 2010		In-lesson verbal interaction tape recorded conversations	Transcribed to see language of positioning	5.5.2.4 5.10.1
3. early September – mid October 2010		Data on teachers and teaching assistants' views	Interviews, transcription	5.5.1 5.10.1
4. mid September		Focus groups with students with and without SEN	Structured interview, transcriptions	5.11.2
5. end of October 2010		Visual displays, non-verbal stimuli	Photographs	5.5.2.1 5.5.2.2

Analytically, at the beginning, I used the theory of classification and framing as a criterion for selecting a sample of two primary schools with some differentiation between them in degree of classification and framing. The idea came from Bernstein's theory of classification and framing, and I used it as a research frame. I then studied the grounded theory approach of entering the research site without any hypotheses and as few preconceptions as possible, and subsequently decided to employ this approach in my study to support the process of my research.

From a sample of three schools, I selected two, Sunny Hill and Panoptical Heights after interviews with the SENCOs and some classroom observations of years 4/5/6, as students of this age could provide more information about their environment. I

prepared the profiles of the three schools' tendencies towards weak/strong classification and framing and selected the two with stronger to midpoint classification and framing. Sunny Hill was first and then Panoptical Heights. After making arrangements with the Head and the teachers of 4/5, and 6, the Head selected which students with SEN would be best as my participants. I started collecting data through field notes at the same time as learning at university how to use grounded theory. I decided to use it as a tool as the data from the two schools would guide me to generate my own theory about what determines how the students with SEN communicate with their teachers and peers.

The process I followed was to collect, code, and analyse the three sets of data generated from my purposive sample (Birks & Mills, 2011) - two classes in Sunny Hill and one in Panoptical Heights, as they were identified with similar settings and similar tendencies towards classification and framing. I entered the classrooms with a broad research question '*What influences the inclusion of the students with SEN in the classroom?*' The collection, coding and analysis of the three data sets continued and new categories emerged. I started with field observations in and outside the classrooms and then with in-lesson tape-recorded conversations of students and teachers, the analysis of which enabled me to formulate my main research question near the beginning of my research (Glaser, 1992). What followed were interviews with the teachers and the TAs and the focus groups of students; these helped me formulate my sub-questions. The collection and analysis of the photos was next.

Table 4.2 identifies the data generated from each of the three schools based on multiple qualitative methods.

***Table 4.2* Data collected from the three schools**

	Participant Observations in and out of the classroom	In-lesson tape recorded conversations with students and teachers	Semi-structured interviews with teachers and teaching assistants	Focus groups with SEN and non-SEN students	Photos
Sunny Hill School	12 -Year 4/5 11 -Year 6	6-Year 4/5 6-Year 6	2 -teachers 1 -TA	1 non-SEN-Year 4/5 1 non-SEN Year 6 1 SEN-Year 4/5 & 6	25-Year 4/5 22-Year 6
Panoptical Heights School	12 -Year 5	6-Year 5	1 -teacher 1-TA	1 non-SEN-Year 5 1 SEN-Year 5	21-Year 4/5
Nova Spectrum School	11-Year 4/5	7-Year 4/5	1-teacher	1 non-SEN-Year 5 1 SEN-Year 5	23-Year 4/5

I wanted to discover more about the properties of specific categories, the relationships between them and the conditions under which some categories developed (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). My memos, guided me to my decision to select another school to provide data for my constant comparative analysis in order to saturate the categories developed. The third school was the Nova Spectrum School. The data collected from this school, provided the process of my analysis with new concepts and categories. The new categories enabled me to increase my understanding about the developing theory. As I was generating more data about the theoretical categories, I reached the point where the data did not provide me with any new properties about my developed categories and any additional

understanding about my developing theory. At that point, the process showed me that no further collection of data was needed as my theoretical categories were saturated.

In the next section, I show how I selected and developed my paradigmatic position to the study of the students' with SEN inclusion.

4.2 The paradigmatic underpinnings of the methodological choices

In order to show what I decided was the most appropriate methodological approach for this research, the ideas and objectives of three main research paradigms - the positivist, interpretive/constructionist, and critical - prevalent in special needs research are underlined. This is an important as the decision making process when approaching research depends on the paradigm which is followed (Avramidis & Smith, 1999:27). Developing ideas about different paradigms and their effects on what methodology to select is helpful. For this reason, it is useful to:

- look at the three prevalent paradigms and explain the key ideas
- refer to the methods that previous studies in SEN employed
- explain why I choose a specific paradigmatic position and how it impacts on the research process of this study

4.2.1 Discussion of paradigms

First of all, I need to clarify the meanings of *paradigm* and *methodology*. Ideas about the nature of the world, the origins of knowledge, the interests of research, and the methods employed are all part of a research paradigm underpinned by ontological and epistemological assumptions (Tinson, 2009). The word *paradigm* refers to the epistemological and ontological underpinnings of analysis (Sarantakos, 2007). It also refers to 'a basic set of beliefs that...define the worldview of the researcher-as-interpretive-bricoleur' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:183). The main paradigms I identified as appropriate for studying educational processes (Hays & Singh, 2012) are the positivist, interpretive/constructivist and critical paradigms. The following table is adapted from Hinchey (2008:26) and summarises the features attributed to these paradigms:

Table 4.3 **Terminology associated with major paradigms**

Positivist Research	**Interpretivist Research**	
		Critical
Empirical	Naturalistic	Emancipatory
Experimental	Qualitative	Liberatory
Process-Product		
Quantitative		

(Source: Hinchey, 2008)

The ethical, ontological, epistemological and methodological aspects of different paradigms are embedded in the ways the world is viewed and the stance employed in approaching the world empirically (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:189). The word *epistemology* refers to knowledge about the social world; *ontology* refers to the

origins of reality and whether it appears as an independent entity (Bullock & Trombley, 1999). According to Bryman (2004) the questions asked in epistemology pertain to

> ...what is (or should be) regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline (p.11);

and in ontology to

> ...whether social entities can and should be considered objective entities that have a reality external to social actors, or whether they can and should be considered social constructions built up from the perceptions and actions of social actors (p.16)

Table 4.4 below, adapted from Hatch (2007:6) summarises the assumptions that underline each of the three paradigms by way of comparison.

***Table 4.4* Comparison of epistemological paradigms**

Underlying assumptions about:	Interpretivism	Positivism	Critical Science (postmodern, feminism)
Purpose(s) of research	To understand and interpret daily occurrences and social structures as well as the meanings people give to the phenomena	Discover laws and generalizations which explain reality and allow predict and control	Emancipate people through critique of ideologies that promote inequity and through change in personal understanding that lead to transformation of self-consciousness and social conditions
Nature of reality (Ontology)	Multiple, constructed through human interaction, holistic, divergent	Single, givens, fragmentable, tangible, measurable, convergent	Multiple, constructed, holistic, divergent; social and economic; embedded in issues of equity
Nature of Knowledge (Epistemology)	Events are understood through mental processes of interpretation influenced by and interacts with social context-mutual simultaneous shaping	Events are explained based on knowable facts, real causes or simultaneous effects; lawlike regularities exist	Events are understood within social and economic context with emphasis on ideological critique and praxis
Relationship between the knower and the known	Interrelated, dialogic	Independent, dualism	Interrelated, influenced by society and commitment to emancipation

(Source: Hatch, 2007)

Table (4.4) shows that each paradigm has its own assumptions which serve different purposes of research. The ontological and epistemological assumptions are distinct and the researcher takes a different position to the subject of study according to each paradigm. The importance of studying the different paradigms is because the researcher's observations follow a different conceptual prism in each. Social phenomena are characterised by predefined ideas and perceptions about social reality. What is measured is influenced by the researcher's personal perceptions of these issues, which in turn relates to the scientific theory that underpins them, as distinct from the relativist view of knowledge, which can be based on a number of different paradigms according to difference and perceptions, so there is no absolute truth (Markova, 1994:162). First, I consider positivism.

• **Positivism:** According to the positivist paradigm, reality is objective and exists as an entity independent of the actions of people, and knowledge originates in the more objective approach of the applied sciences. The scientific positioning of the researcher to the data observed, that is, the appropriate application of neutral research methods and tools, keeps data apart from the researcher's personal beliefs; 'what they do is good science, free of individual science and subjectivity' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:12). Social reality is impartially investigated by 'confirmatory investigations' in order to 'test hypotheses and check predictions; (Denscombe, 2007:116). The positivist approach studies 'society and the social system [through] medium/large-scale research, [following the] model of natural sciences and generalizing from the specific'; the researcher holds the position of an outsider and deals with 'macro-concepts: society, institutions, norms, positions, roles, expectations' (McKenzie, 2001:17).

Ratner (1997) explains how the paradigm of positivism, developed by American sociologists, psychologists and political scientists in the 1920s, seems to be insufficient for studying cultural psychological phenomena. Positivism views psychological phenomena as variables which are separate entities with measurable strength. For example, self-esteem could be measured as its strength increases or decreases under the influence of other factors. The tenets of positivism entail the concept of:

- atomism, which presumes that phenomena are separate entities, independent variables;
- quantification, which implies that phenomena have a measurable strength which can be quantified and finally;
- operationalism represents phenomena as simple, overt behaviour.

The positivist view of phenomena as independent entities and quantifiable variables unaffected by the existence of other phenomena cannot represent their dynamic and cultural character. Positivists argue that the purpose of looking at phenomena scientifically is to establish causal explanations for social phenomena (Schwandt, 2000:190). Post-positivism does not share the positivist perspective that the reality that exists out there can be studied in a straightforward manner but relies on the notion that reality cannot be fully captured but only approached (Guba, 1990). Even so, post-positivist researchers employ multiple methods to understand reality but sustain the need to determine the scientific origin of theories and to validate them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

The positivist view of the existence of an objective reality was challenged by Kuhn (1970) in his claim that the theory scientists adopted for their subject study determined the way they perceived it. Different theories lead to different interpretations of social reality, which often conflict. Therefore, there are no neutral tools for the analysis of objective reality, independent of any theoretical system. The different philosophical positions to social organization, the subject's relations with society, the possibility of obtaining objective knowledge of social reality and the role of the social sciences in the production of knowledge, are positions implied in the application of different methods and techniques. Research tools are not

independent of theory; 'we shall discover that one and the same operation, when it attaches to nature through a different paradigm, can become an index to a quite different aspect of nature's regularity' (Kuhn, 1970:130). The positivist paradigm has a tendency to employ quantitative methodologies, which presuppose a specific theory from which specific cases are drawn. Theoretical assumptions are developed before the beginning of the research, and determine the type of data required to test them; 'the previously acquired knowledge is substantiated in the form of an expanded and confirmed paradigm' (Markova, 1994:161). Planning can only slightly change after the investigation has started and its main feature is that it allows the connection of two or more features from a number of cases, thus, highlighting the general tendencies shown in a sample. Quantitative research is thus structured within a network of variable characteristics the cases included in the sample. These characteristics are interrelated to find general trends and verify theoretical assumptions. They focus on the measurement of theoretical concepts through tools, such as standardised questionnaires (Onwuegbuzie & Combs, 2010).

• **Interpretivist/constructivist:** Interpretivist/constructivist researchers argue that reality is subjective and has multiple meanings which people construct through their actions in the social world. It is necessary to understand human action and participants in research should be allowed to reflect on the phenomena under study and act upon them (Robson, 1993). Phenomena have cultural origins and emphasis is given to understanding the effect of social facts on psychological phenomena. The cultural character of social phenomena emanates from social events, relationships and social conditions and the characteristics of their cultural character change if social conditions are transformed. The role of research is to explore the social character and meaning of phenomena and the effect of society on phenomena (Bell, 2005).

Participants are the focus in order to gain a better understanding of the cultural character of phenomena. The interpretive approach studies 'The individual [through] small-scale, non-statistical research, interpreting the specific; the researcher has an active personal involvement and deals with 'micro-concepts: individual perspective, personal constructs, negotiated meanings, definitions of situations' (McKenzie, 2001:17). It investigates human actions and experiences with emphasis on the meanings and actions and not the causes, 'so as to allow meaning to emerge from the situation being studied' (Holliday, 1994:181). Qualitative methods in the interpretive paradigm could be used to systematically study the structure of psychological phenomena in a natural way and for educing the meanings from the participants (Bloor et al., 2001) of the multiple perspectives of phenomena under study (Willis, 2008). The use of qualitative methods is advantageous for the comprehensive understanding of subjective experience and social conditions in communication (Ratner, 1997).

Critical Theory: Critical theory is an extension of social constructivism (Hays & Singh, 2012) and an attempt to explain social events based on the conditions in which they emerged. To achieve this, the study of a wide and complex variety of social phenomena and factors is necessary. Unlike the positivist paradigm, critical

theory argues that society is a totality, 'in the sense of a constructive, 'socializing process" (Strydom, 2011:43), and science, like any act, is affected and depends on the society within which it operates. Every science is based on a theory about society for the *reconstruction* of the phenomenon under study, providing an explanation and analysis of it (Strydom, 2011). According to 'The Frankfurt School' in 1923, and key figures like Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse and Habermas, the traditional theories of science (interpretivism, positivism) enable data to be understood, described and interpreted, but is not interested in changing them (Held, 1980). The social genesis of problems is examined superficially and their solution is not the concern of these traditional theories based on the principle of detachment from the subject. Moreover, critical theorists accuse positivism of tending to support the people with power instead of those being subjugated (Willis, 2008). For Critical theory,

- In the field of social sciences events are social constructs, products of human activity and therefore subject to change;

- Anything recorded in the mind as an experience is shaped by cognitive categories and concepts, which in turn depend on the language and the forms of life of society and thus, may vary (Payne & Barbera, 2010).

The essential difference between Critical Theory and positivism is that Critical Theorists see the product of human mind not as psychological, but social. Critical theorists rely on Marxist concepts of alienation and emancipation to create a framework within which science will enable people to acknowledge that economic relations and cultural structure are products of human work and that humans are alienated by the established social structures and processes. Alienation is a) the product of his/her labour, b) due to the work process, c) other people and d) by him/her self. Humans are eventually unable to determine their actions except through emancipation after realising that *underground* authoritarian and culturally alienating relationships really determine actions (Held, 1980). Consequently, the research process tends to focus on participants as their voices are suppressed by powerful social forces (Hays & Singh, 2012). Critical theory can select from a range of both qualitative and quantitative methods depending on the object of study and the aims of the research (Strydom, 2011).

The following section discusses the decision-making process for selecting the paradigm that best suits the objectives of this research and the approach for interpreting the research questions.

4.2.2 Choosing a paradigm and methods

According to Avramidis and Smith (1999) the positivist paradigm cannot consider the versatile and complicated nature of SEN as the needs of students with SEN are not homogeneous and different methods are needed in order to study their nature and decide upon interventions. Statistical analysis and predictions are based on the diagnosis and categorisation of SEN according to the medical model of disability to

identify the problem and situates it within the person. The interpretivist paradigm views SEN as a social construct emerging from a specific setting and thus identifies the impact of the context on the individual. Looking at multiple factors that could contribute to the development of SEN as a concept provides a more complete picture of the phenomenon under study. In this study, the purpose is to explore and construct an analytical framework for conceptualising ways in which students' meaning making is realised in their communicative practices within mainstream classes. The question of *how students with SEN are positioned and identified by teachers and peers through the discourse of contrasting classroom settings*, views identification and positioning as a product of their engagement with social practices which are subordinate to institutional imperatives. Wider social structures and cultural processes influence local practices and meanings and have important consequences for individual actions and identities (Maybin, 2000). This suggests the need to look at micro and macro-level contexts in order to show that SEN is a socially constructed concept and a complex phenomenon with multiple perspectives that need to be identified (Avramidis & Smith, 1999). For this reason, my analysis will consider whether meaning-making, identity and positioning are context specific, constructed by the social and cultural settings in which they develop, and are influenced by broader social and cultural processes (Maybin, 2000).

At the methodological level, as the concept of SEN is socially constructed and its nature is social, multiple views have to be considered to understand how it is constructed. Therefore, qualitative methods, such as interviews, focus groups, observations and visual data will explore how students with SEN, their teachers and peers experience SEN in mainstream classroom and how their positions unfold in their natural environment. Moreover, the emphasis is on the voices of students with SEN and their *emic* perspective of SEN, their individual perspective, will be prioritised as previous studies of inclusion are based mainly on the perceptions of teachers, parents and peers. Qualitative methods enable a better understanding of school practices and the interactions involved in the inclusion of students with SEN at the social, organisational, and interactional levels in mainstream classrooms. The multiple methods research approach employed in this study sees the researcher as a *bricoleur* defined as a 'Jack of all trades or a kind of professional do it yourself person' (Levi-Strauss, 1966: 17). The result of synthesising different methods is the *bricolage*, a product that is reshaped as different methods are employed. On this basis, it is essential for the researcher to reflect at every stage of the research process and to be flexible according to the needs of the research in order to construct a coherent research design (Avramidis & Wilde, 2009).

However, from the critical paradigm perspective, this would mean locating the root of the problem without helping the participants change their situation. This is the emancipatory feature of this theory as students with SEN need to be empowered in order to improve their inclusion and benefit from best practices by affecting policy. Consequently, it is important to investigate how SEN students experience structures that prevent their effective and productive inclusion and to use the findings to bring about change (Avramidis & Smith, 1999). For this purpose, qualitative methods, such as narratives are employed in order to enable subjugated participants to have a

voice (Booth, 1996). The research questions were developed based on my interpretivist position and the study's objective of identifying the practices and perceptions that construct SEN, as well as the diverse views of the inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream education and the views of teachers and students of SEN. These questions are discussed in the next section.

4.3 Questions of this research

My research questions were reviewed and reconstructed several times in the process of my fieldwork and eventually generated a key research question and sub-questions for clarity and specificity. My main research question has been answered through qualitative research to explore and understand the meanings teachers and students attribute to the positioning and identification of children with SEN as well as the meanings constructed by the children with SEN about their identification and positioning by teachers and peers.

The basic research question is:

'In what ways are students with SEN identified and positioned in mainstream education settings by their teachers and peers?'

The inclusion of children with SEN was studied using both qualitative and quantitative methods and a Multimodal investigation of specific school cases to enable a holistic and deep understanding of the communicative issues of children with SEN with their peers and their positioning within different modes of communication. These questions developed through the study of three schools in three different counties in the East Midlands of England. Two are state primary schools and one a private primary school with the Steiner education system. These schools are all co-educational and attended by children both with and without special educational needs.

The following sub-questions emerged:

1. *Which forms of pedagogy **benefited** the inclusion of students with SEN in the specific school cases studied?*

2. *Which forms of pedagogy brought **obstacles** to the successful inclusion of students with SEN in the case study schools?*

3. *What **best practice** for the inclusion of students with SEN could be identified in the specific schools?*

This research attempts to answer these research questions through the use of the qualitative methods described below.

4.4The selection of methodology for this study

This research is a case study of three English primary schools taking a qualitative approach to gain an understanding of the educational reality students with SEN experience through their different degrees of inclusion in specific classroom tasks. I was interested in studying both their verbal and nonverbal communication. *Qualitative* ,in this case, places emphasis on the qualities of the subjects of study and the processes and meanings are neither studied experimentally nor measured in terms of 'quantity, amount, intensity and frequency' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:10). Researchers engaged in qualitative methods are not considered weaker than quantitative researchers but different, as they highlight the socially constructed nature of reality, the close relationship between the researcher and the subject under study and the limitations of context that shape the research.

> Qualitative methods may be more suitable when flexibility is required to study a new phenomenon about which we know very little, or when we seek to gain insight into the subjective meanings of complex phenomena to advance our conceptualization of them and build a theory that can be tested in future studies. (Rubin & Babbie, 2011:41)

Qualitative researchers seek answers to questions pertaining to the ways in which social experience is developed and conceptualised. Unlike quantitative studies, which focus on measuring and analyzing causal relationships between variables rather than processes, qualitative researchers study humans within their social context and try to understand their conditions and problems and how people conceptualise them.

> Whether the method is interviewing or observation, direct engagement in the social world focuses the sociological eye on the interaction between structure and action-on how people are embedded in larger social and cultural contexts and how, in turn, they actively participate in shaping the worlds they inhabit (Gerson & Horowitz, 2002:203)

The main reason for selecting a qualitative methodology in this case study is the nature of the social subjects under investigation, the students. For example, quantitative methods like the use of questionnaires with standardised sets of questions, even structured interviews would not achieve the objective of this study. The nature of the social subjects and the nature of the questions regarding the inclusion and positioning of students with SEN in the classroom imposed a qualitative methodology. The objective of this study is to 'pay special attention to understand life as the participants see it' (Babbie, 2010:417) and for this reason, a qualitative methodology is best suited to discover the 'underlying meanings and patterns of relationships' (ibidem, p.397). The advantage of using qualitative methods in this investigation was because 'Qualitative techniques provide a set of analytic tools to discover, understand and explain the forms that social organizations take and the paths socially embedded actors follow.' (Gerson & Horowitz, 2002:220). Moreover, the nature of the theoretical framework selected

for the investigation of the subject of this research determined the choice of methodological approach. The use of the case study, an intensive analysis of individuals, groups, or events stressing developmental factors in relation to context, is appropriate here and it also allows cross-comparisons between the 3 schools studied. The case study 'seeks a range of different kinds of evidence, evidence which is there in the case setting, and which has to be abstracted and collated to get the best possible answers to the research questions' (Gillham, 2000:1). The meaning of case pertains to:

- a unit of human activity embedded in the real world;
- which can only be studied or understood in context;
- which exists in the here and now;
- that merges in with its context so that precise boundaries are difficult to draw. (Gillham, 2000:1)

The need to *listen* to the children's views incorporates a broad range of perspectives of children and childhood regarding the research questions and the methods. For example, a child with SEN is categorised under a universal concept of disability, hence deprived of the choices of able peers, (Morris, 1997), is under surveillance (Alan, 1996) and underprivileged in terms of the opportunities to interact socially in the same way as peers without SEN. As a researcher, I felt the need to study whether children with SEN who experience institutions with weak classification and framing (Bernstein, 1996) subscribe to different values or communicate in different ways from those in institutions with strong classification. This implies the need to look at disability as socially and culturally constructed (Davies, 1999). Previous research (Shah & Priestley, 2011) has tended to focus on categorising children in terms of their impairments and suggested interventions based on medical and developmental approaches. From the mid-1970s, the *social model* of disability has been used by many researchers (Morris, 1991; Zarb, 1995) to redefine disability in terms of social exclusion and less on medical origins.

As disability is seen as socially determined in this study, it was critical for the voices of the children to emerge as social actors capable of influencing the structures that exist in their context (James & Prout, 1990). My study on the communication of children is interpretive with an epistemological orientation emphasising how children view their social world in terms of their identity and positioning in their social environment. The interpretive paradigm assumes that social constructions such as language, consciousness and shared meanings give access to reality as experienced by the subjects studied. To discover how classroom discourses affect the visibility of students with SEN and their experience of social inclusion required listening carefully to the voices of both children with SEN and their peers to better understand their views and evaluations of the meaning of inclusion for them, which could then be used to create more inclusive practices. In particular, this research study is interested in contributing to the complicated process of social inclusion by looking at the different ways through which children communicate and experience this in school. It should be remembered that children's voices represent only one aspect of communication in the intricate process of inclusion (Allan, 1999).

Theories of inclusion and multimodal communication, discussed in Chapter two (Section 2.2) and Chapter three (Section 3.2.1) were critical for the development of a qualitative approach and the selection of qualitative methods for my project. Hence, children's communication as a reflection of their inclusion was explored through their personal accounts of experience in focus groups and informal discussions in the classroom and in the playground. Furthermore, reflections on inclusion involved non-verbal communication and the role of context which mediated verbal and non-verbal communication. Taking into account these objectives, participant observations, fieldnotes, in-depth interviews and photographs were collected as data for analysis. Combining these different methods allowed the data to be *triangulated* and therefore have greater validity (Messiou, 2002; Barbour, 2001). Triangulation is the combination of different methods to increase the validity of research and the trustworthiness of the data for analysis through giving a fuller picture of the phenomenon under study. It minimises researcher's preconceptions and helps counterbalance the weaknesses of one method with the strengths of another to test the hypotheses (Perlesz & Lindsay, 2003; Flick, 2002). The triangulation of different methods enabled me to study holistically the modes and different perspectives available in the specific case study settings in which the research was conducted. The triangulation of data also enabled me to become more critical of the data collected (Lewis, 2002).

As I was interested in looking at both the verbal and non-verbal interactions of the children, I triangulated information from focus groups, observation, interviews with teachers to improve the credibility and trustworthiness of my data. Additionally, the impact of context on the communication of children was studied as their meaning making needs to be understood in relation to the context in which it was produced (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Transcribed recorded tapes, interview questions can be found in appendices.

4.5 Research procedures

My purpose in the first phase of the study was to identify which children had special educational needs. My open participant observations, in which the researcher 'takes a role within the organisation being studied but is known by everyone to be doing so as a researcher' (Thomas, 2004:183), in the classroom and in the playground combined with discussions with teachers facilitated the process of selection. The identification of the students with SEN in mainstream classes seemed straightforward as there were several indicators, such as grouping by ability, learning support and outside the classroom learning sessions. My observations together with teachers' interviews were used as a basis for closer observations of specific students with SEN.

In the focus groups, issues of confidentiality and anonymity were explained to the children in the SEN and the non-SEN groups as this distinction was pre-established in the classrooms of the Sunny Hill and the Panoptical Heights schools. Discussion around issues of inclusion was encouraged without asking direct questions to avoid

directing the discussion to give them the opportunity to discuss in their own voices matters they considered important, for instance, general things about what they liked and disliked at school, to comment on their interactions with each other and on their friendship circles (see Appendix D). Questions about their lesson preferences led them to discuss their friendships and problems with teachers and with other children in the classroom. They discussed their dissatisfaction at working with specific children and their concerns about peers who preferred to work alone.

Discussions developed about the children's feelings towards peers with behavioural and academic problems and possible reasons for their isolation. The information from the focus groups with children was cross-referenced with my observations and interviews with teachers. In addition, the discussions with children with SEN in focus groups aimed to explore their perspectives on whether they chose isolation from other peers or experienced marginalisation/exclusion and for what reasons. For ethical reasons, the words i*solation* and *marginalisation* were not used to avoid leading the respondents into a specific negative conceptualisation of SEN. The content of the questions was similar to those used for the children without SEN to allow ideas to emerge naturally from their responses. Focus group interviews were taped recorded, transcribed and analysed. Open coding, that is, common themes were identified and initial categories set up for analysis. For instance, an initial category was 'peer communication' under which the subcategories 'communicative style' and 'positioning in communication' were developed.

4.5.1 Research design

My chosen field of study and the salient issues in SEN, i.e. inclusion, curriculum, identification, are of paramount significance as they concern enduring issues concerning students with SEN. I wanted to free myself from any preconceptions about what I expected to find in the specific setting. Although I had a general idea of what I wanted to investigate, I wanted to be flexible about how to proceed with the fieldwork and which particular questions to answer. This is part of the inductive process that qualitative researchers follow, as they believe that a study itself shapes the research questions, and any theoretical ideas derive from the data, and are not prior to the data (Charmaz, 1997). This does not mean that qualitative research has no design. On the contrary, researchers have their own background knowledge of the topics they are interested in studying and theoretical approaches to help them decide what type of data to collect, how to analyse it according to their philosophical standpoint and what kind of broad questions to bear in mind as they proceed. Thus, the researchers' fieldwork is less structured and more flexible, with no unalterable plans or questions.

4.5.2 Multisite study

The multiple site approach used in this qualitative research has the purpose of generating a theory, which is the main difference from multi-case studies (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). The multi-case study approach has multiple expressions; some studies are single-case studies that aim to generalise their findings through

additional collections of data in other settings to show the original findings can be applied to new settings or participants. Other multi-case studies are comparative case studies where two or more cases are compared (McIntyre, 1969) based on specific similarities or differences between the two contexts (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Moreover, in multicase studies, fieldwork is conducted sequentially and not simultaneously in all settings for reasons of efficiency, i.e. data management, time organisation. I decided to use *the constant comparative method* in my multisite research project as an approach to the collection, analysis and generation of my theory. The *constant comparative method* and *analytic induction* are designs used to generate grounded theory.

Before discussing the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1994), I first discuss modified analytic induction (Cressey, 1950) and its characteristics for data collection and analysis. Both designs analyse data right from the beginning of the study and finish by combining the data at the end and both can be used in tandem by qualitative researchers for multisite studies. In analytic induction, for example, the researcher conducts interviews, analyses the data and generates a theory and then carries out more interviews and data analysis until the phenomenon under study can be explained. In the constant comparative method, the analysis and formation of theory reach an end after the researcher has exhausted the properties and dimensions of the categories, no new categories can be identified and the categories' interrelationships are entrenched, a process called *theoretical saturation* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The constant comparative method is employed in my study as it is an open process for discovering key issues and thinking analytically about incidents, in managing the types of data collected and in incorporating multisite studies for theory making (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

As I was interested in studying the communication of students with SEN in the classroom, I visited the Sunny Hill Primary School and observed what emerged from that specific site with as few preconceptions as possible in order to remain sensitive to the data. This meant observing incidents and recording them without associating them with any preconceived notions (Glaser, 1978:2). At the beginning of my project, I communicated with the Head and the teachers and discussed my role and my project's objectives. As a start, I observed year 4/5 in class and the conversations between the students and teacher that developed within lessons during individual and group-oriented tasks. From that moment, I decided to study this kind of communication and to collect data on student interactions in the classroom. I also decided to collect data outside the classroom, i.e. in the corridors, dining room, assembly room and playground to investigate how children talk to each other inside and outside the classroom, who they include in their interactions and for what reason, how they develop their friendship circles and evaluate other people's behaviour. I also noted how children use labelling in their communication and how children with SEN experience labelling in their identification and positioning. As I collected data, I started identifying the multiple meanings that student communication entails. In the classroom, I realized that communication is framed by the teacher's teaching style and learning activities, which are mediated by the

spatial organisation of furniture and exploitation of various semiotic resources, i.e. photos, posters, books, tools.

As I coded and analysed the data I identified the children's evaluations of their peers with SEN and how they positioned them in their world. My observations in the classroom helped me realise the impact of the environment on the ways children interact. Throughout my presence in the first school I kept notes of my observations and experience with the children. My purpose was to develop a theory attached to that specific classroom. I tried to talk to different people, i.e. teaching assistants, playground buddies and teachers to enrich my knowledge of the interactions of children with SEN and their peers and include more properties and dimensions of children's communication.

As Corbin and Strauss (1990:95) note, *constant comparison* refers to the continuous process of comparing any new incident with previous incidents to identify similarities and differences. The concepts that emerge are then compared and grouped under categories, which 'are higher in level and more abstract than the concepts they represent'. This process helps the researcher remain as objective as possible during the data analysis as she keeps testing concepts against the emerging data. Continuous comparison enables the research process to group, accurately and systematically, concepts that refer 'always' and 'only' (p.98) to the same phenomena and helps the researcher, develop a theory inductively, by categorizing, coding, explaining categories and how they relate to each other (Boeije, 2002). Along with constant comparison, *theoretical sampling* can be used whereby the researcher decides what data to collect next and from where, based on concepts which are provisional until tested against new data that stem from the analysis and reflection on preceding data (Corbin & Strauss, 1990:94, 97). The researcher is involved in a systematic process whereby new questions emerge from the analysis of, reflection on and possible explanations of phenomena, the development of categories and the relationship between categories. When new data do not provide new information for developing new categories, then the categories are *saturated* and new data can be allocated to the pre-established categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). According to Corbin and Strauss (1990:97) 'theoretical sampling' enhances the 'representativeness' and 'consistency' of concepts as the researcher can specify the conditions that produce the phenomenon under study, their expression through actions and interactions, their consequences and variations. Consistency of concepts is when a concept's indicators are found consistently in all interviews and observations. The basic requirement for developing a comprehensive theory is effective and efficient research methods for sampling (Morse et al., 2007). Before I discuss my sampling decisions, I outline strategies for sampling in qualitative research and then sampling techniques for grounded theory in the next section.

4.5.3 Sampling

As I was collecting data from the first school and in the process of developing my first provisional concepts, I began to feel that the children's communication was

related to the hierarchical structure of ability in their classroom and their views about learning, friendships, inclusive practices, marginalisation, labelling and low self-esteem. I decided to move on to another primary school as I thought the children's communication might be different there. This enabled me to expand my unfolding theory of the children's communication strategies. I selected a private Rudolph Steiner school promoting Rudolf Steiner's integrated and spiritual education as a potential setting to discover new ways children with SEN communicate with their peers to incorporate into my theory and expand it. According to Charmaz (2006:100), this is 'initial sampling' which, in grounded theory, is where you start whereas theoretical sampling directs you where to go.'

In the process of initial sampling, criteria related to the study and prospective participants, institutions, settings for sampling are selected before accessing the field. This research interest was how students with SEN interact with their peers in mainstream classrooms, consequently, what SEN covers is important. The next step was to find out what *interaction* and *SEN* meant to students and teachers and decide which students with SEN I wanted to include in this study. I also considered my own preconceptions about children with SEN to become aware of who I wanted to contact in order to examine the selected area.

Within the multisite approach, the schools and participants involved in this study and their characteristics are discussed in the following section.

4.6 The Selection of schools for the case study

I first noted identified attributes that could create a typology, i.e. mainstream state primary schools, urban/rural school settings, and number of students with SEN, achievement scores in National Tests, indications of weak/strong classification and framing (Bernstein, 1990). I visited a few schools, discussed these characteristics with informants and obtained attribute data. The selection of the first school was based on a variety of the above - i.e. state school, SEN students, attainments, classification and framing, rather than its representativeness. The main issue was access as most schools were not interested in participating in my project. The primary purpose was to choose cases which I believed would generate as much information as possible. After the selection of the first site, the need to include more than one school was based on the requirements of the *constant comparative method* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) which is a grounded theory strategy explained in Section 4.14.4.

4.6.1 Screening schools

The conceptual framework and first research questions determined the selection of the first sample of people and setting to study. To formulate a multiple site research study, I had to reduce the parameters of the study by deciding what kind of schools and which to include in the sample. Before collecting the screening data, I constructed a set of operational criteria, i.e. rural/urban schools, number of SEN

students, performance criteria, classification and framing principles, Ofsted report, time frame, according to which schools would serve as cases.

There was a two stage screening procedure. During the first stage, I gathered archival information from the DfE about the background of each school in Derbyshire via Ofsted reports. I looked at the number of children with SEN enrolled in each school and whether that was below or above average in proportion to mainstream students and whether there was special provision available for children with SEN. Then I looked at the statistical figures illustrating the proportion of children with SEN participating in national exams. Once this information was obtained, letters were sent out to schools with above average and average levels of children with SEN enrolled with and without School Action or School Action Plus. Depending on the response rate of schools and the access I gained, I proceeded with the second phase of screening. The second stage was based on Bernstein's theoretical framework (1990, 1996) regarding the principles of classification and framing, which acted as a basis for investigating the relationship between these factors and selecting the three schools. The first two were state schools, while the third was independent and last to be included in my research.

4.6.2 Preliminary visits to the three schools

The idea was to start with one school to understand its attitude to strong/weak classification and framing principles and in to select on this theoretical basis, the final samples for the study. I would decide the final samples after observations on the school site and after interviewing the head teachers and SENCOs (Special Education Needs Coordinator) about the practices involved in the education of children with SEN and its impact on their socialisation. I sent out one hundred and one letters to schools in the East Midlands on 2nd November, 2009 and waited for their responses. My supervisors also suggested a list of schools where they had previously worked but my efforts to access them were unsuccessful; some did not respond, others had internal affairs to take care of and some were already collaborating with other researchers. In the following two weeks while waiting for responses, I sent emails to the Heads and the SENCOs of the same schools I had sent letters and to new ones I had not included in the first list. I thought emails might be a more effective and immediate way to inform the Heads and SENCOs about the aims of my study and to get responses. About ten schools responded they could not help because they either had their own school issues or were very busy. Two schools responded by letter stating that they were sorry that they could not help me at that stage; most did not respond at all. Towards the end of November 2009, I received six responses from Heads and SENCOs by email saying they would be happy to support my work. They asked me to call and arrange an appointment with them. Five schools were from East Midlands. The interviews with the Heads and the SENCOs started on the 25th November 2009, most in the first two weeks of December, 2009. All the participants were informed about the purpose and interests of the study and all the necessary ethical guidelines were followed as stated by BERA (2004) i.e. informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, privacy. Overall, although the sampling plan was carefully managed to gain access to

comparable groups of pupils at times convenient to the prospective primary schools, this strategy was, in the end, less effective than hoped.

4.6.3 Within school sampling

The *interview guide*, which refers to 'preset questions to which ...want answers or about which ...want to gather data' (Seidman, 2006:91), gave me some idea of the questions to ask in the interviews with the Heads and the SENCOs in order to manage decisions about cross-case comparability (Lofland & Lofland, 1995). . The questions to the Heads and the SENCOs were open-ended and covered issues of specific educational practices for children with SEN, the professional development of teachers to meet their needs and the social relationships of children at school. After each interview, I was given time to observe the external and internal space of the school focusing on the classrooms of year 4, 5 and 6. I kept notes on the spatial arrangements of the desks and furniture and on visual displays to get an idea about weak/strong classification and framing (Moore et al., 2006). After visiting each school, I wrote general notes about my feelings about the interview, the setting, and the process. I needed to maintain communication with the schools in case I wanted to include more than one site in the final sample.

4.6.4 The final sample of schools

I prepared a report stating the features and dispositions of the first school site including a table of the main features to create a clear view of the principles of classification and framing. Bernstein's (1996) theory of classification and framing describes how the structure of classroom organisation relates to modes of social relations, i.e. co-operative vs. hierarchical (Ivinson & Duveen, 2006). For example, in year 4/5 class at Sunny Hill School, I discovered that children had fixed places to sit depending on ability. Wall displays were mainly teacher's work with emphasis on curriculum-related themes like Numeracy, Literacy. For a detailed description of the classroom, see 5.3.2.

My presence in the second school, the Panoptical Heights School, arose from the analysis, coding and interpretation of the data from the first school, based on the grounded theory approach and on *theoretical sampling*. While I was collecting new data from the Panoptical Heights School, I realised that there were differences in the principles of classification and framing. A detailed description of the classroom layout is presented in 5.3.4.

After this, I contacted the Heads of Sunny Hill School and Panoptical Heights School again and arranged to see them to explain the theoretical and practical details of the next part of my research. I worked to establish a good rapport with teachers and children so they felt comfortable with my presence in the classroom. I also continued with my field notes which I transcribed and analysed. After the first month of observation once or twice a week at both Sunny Hill and the Panoptical Heights schools, I proceeded with the semi-structured interviews: teachers from

years 4/5 and 6 at Sunny Hill and from year 5 at Panoptical Heights were open to being interviewed and tape recorded. After transcribing and analysing the teachers' interviews, I needed more information to answer my research questions and sub-questions, so the teaching assistants who worked with the SEN children in the classrooms were also asked to be interviewed. The teaching assistant of year 4/5 from Sunny Hill School gave a tape-recorded semi-structured interview while the TA from year 6 did not consent to participate for personal reasons, which I fully respected. The TA from year 5 in Panoptical Heights also gave a tape-recorded semi-structured interview.

While I was transcribing and reading through the interviews with teachers and teaching assistants, the first themes of the data analysis started to emerge. In their interviews teachers and teaching assistants elaborated on how teachers' and school practices could emphasise the emotional side of children's education more than their academic progress and how this could be improved. They talked about the need for a balanced curriculum which would best answer the needs of children with SEN in mainstream classrooms. They discussed the *whole child* approach, which was not yet realised in either school's philosophy. The answers of the teachers and TAs encouraged me to look at how a mainstream school with a holistic approach to the education of children with SEN might address their emotional and academic needs. In order to answer my research question in an inclusive way, I needed to access a third school which actually promoted the whole child education approach to enable me to contrast three learning environments and their pedagogies for children with SEN.

After discussion with my supervisors, we agreed that a primary school with Rudolf Steiner's pedagogical philosophy might make a good contrast, as it has different educational practices for children with SEN. I contacted an independent primary Steiner school and attended the school's open day to collect more information and discuss my project with the teachers. I met the year 4/5 teacher and discussed the purpose of my study and was given the opportunity to observe some classrooms. The teacher asked me to send him further details by email about the technical aspects of my research and suggested he would discuss my proposal with the other teachers as there is no conventional management system in this school. After ten days, the year 4/5 teacher replied that the teachers had agreed to give me access to students to conduct my research. That was the beginning of a new cycle of data collection in a new learning environment. Across my observations in the classroom of year 4/5 at Steiner school, I noticed that the curriculum combined subjects from the National Curriculum and subjects from Steiner's curriculum, with emphasis on music and rhythm, movement, painting, drama and farming. More details of the classroom layout facilities are given in 5.10.1.

In sum, my presence at multiple settings and my interaction with teachers, SENCOs and Heads provided me with contrasting and comparable information about schools. The systematic review of multiple settings prior to final sampling and fieldwork enabled me to look concurrently at multiple sites and to decide on data-

rich settings to answer my research question. The next section gives a detailed background to the participating schools.

4.7 Detailed background of the selected schools

4.7.1 Pedagogic models and Practice

These primary schools' contextual value added measures (CVA), a statistical means of indicating differences in the expected level of progress in English, Mathematics and Science were compared. A school's KS2 (Key Stage) results are largely affected by pupil progress between KS1 and KS2. My purpose was to find any differences in the level of academic attainment in Sunny Hill and Panoptical Heights. The Performance Tables from 2010 provided information on the performance of each school in the National Tests and Teacher Assessments as well as the expected levels of pupils' progress in English, Mathematics and Science. These results could be affected by how pupils are organised in relation to learning within contexts which promote what Bernstein called *performative pedagogy* (1996). Bernstein (1996:58) refers to the 'competence model' and the 'performance model', which can be seen as two opposing modes of power (classification) and control (framing).

The two pedagogic models provide the rules which link the structure of classroom organisation to types of social relations, i.e. cooperative vs. hierarchical. Each model is associated with particular pedagogical practices. For instance, in a competence model, the discourse of instruction from which children are expected to reconstruct knowledge is implicit, giving them autonomy to produce their own work. Cooperative work and sharing activities can be seen as part of the competence model, characterised by weak classification and framing and developed within cooperative social relations. By contrast, the performance model is characterised by strong classification and framing; emphasis is given to explicit criteria whereby children reproduce knowledge, reducing their autonomy to produce their own original work and increasing teacher control over subject criteria. Focus is on performance and children are classified as high or low achievers. High stakes testing is an important factor for constructing the pedagogy and given that in England, emphasis is placed on the sequencing, structuring and pacing of English, Mathematics and Science, the core subjects of the National curriculum achievement Tests, assessment could be seen as the 'purest form' of control over pedagogy (Bernstein, 1996).

Children with statements of SEN or with SEN supported by School Action Plus and students with SEN supported by School Action are eligible for assessment under the National Curriculum once they reach the end of KS2 (DfE, 2011). Children included in School Action receive additional or different support from that which the school provides through a different curriculum. These interventions all target children who make little or no progress, have difficulty in acquiring literacy or mathematical skills, express continual emotional or behavioural difficulties, have sensory or physical problems and develop communication and/or interaction difficulties (DfE, 2011). Children aided by School Action Plus are offered alternative interventions to

those provided for School Action, through the support of external professional agencies. This intervention targets children who continue to show little or no progress and work at levels below the standards of the National Curriculum and in addition, find it difficult to acquire literacy and mathematical skills, show emotional or behavioural difficulties which impede learning and communication, require additional specialist support for their sensory or physical needs and develop communication or interaction difficulties that obstruct their social development.

4.7.2 Sunny Hill Primary School

Sunny Hill is a voluntary controlled mixed school maintained by the Local Authority with some religious underpinning in the governing body. It is nestled in a small middle-class village in East Midlands. 122 children, aged 5 to 11 years old, attend the school. 17 students are supported by School Action Plus and 7 students with SEN are supported by School Action. Most of the pupils are White British with a few from a minority ethnic background. Children come from families with low socioeconomic status (Ofsted, 2008) which makes them eligible for free school meals. The children's performance is monitored through their progress in the core subjects of the National Curriculum, i.e. English, Mathematics and Science. The school's policy and practice have to be understood in the context of the National Tests and examinations established by the National Curriculum's approach to assessment. Seventeen pupils were at the end of Key Stage 2 (KS2) and therefore, eligible to take the tests in 2010. All the pupils, including three pupils with statements of SEN or with SEN support through School Action Plus and one student with SEN supported through School Action were eligible for assessment under the National Curriculum since they had reached the end of KS2.

A proportion of 82% of eligible pupils in each subject achieved Level 4 or above in English and Mathematics, with an average point score (APS) of 27.7 in all subjects in KS2 tests in 2010. This compares with 76% of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in other schools in the Local Authority (LA) area of Derbyshire and the 73% who achieved the same standards in England as a whole. The Progress Measures from KS1 to KS2 in this school indicate that 81% of pupils reached the expected level of progress in English while 94% achieved the expected level of progress in Maths. Teacher Assessments (TA) gave the percentage of children expected to attain Level 4 or above or Level 5 in English, Mathematics and Science. The TA for English was 65% with 24% of students reaching Level 5; TA for Mathematics 88% of students managing Level 4 or above with 35% reaching Level 5; in Science 94% of pupils attaining Level 4 or above with 47% getting to Level 5. The school's ethos was described by the head teacher as follows:

> Teachers in this school look at each child as an individual. They change school to fit the child and they do not expect the child to go to a school and change everything about him to fit their way of teaching; they change themselves to fit the child.

The school also collaborates with external organisations and professionals to achieve an equal distribution of support for each child's different intellectual and emotional needs. Practices like the *common assessment framework* allow the school to contact these people for specific problems. For instance, if parents have social or family difficulties, they can discuss them with the professionals and work together to find possible solutions. Teachers' assessment of academic performance aims to manage children's individual needs and plan lessons effectively. Parents are informed of their children's progress through annual academic reports and discuss any problems encountered. These meetings of school staff and parents of children with SEN to discuss their progress become a partnership to ensure learning is supported. In terms of improvement, the head teacher believed the school needs to employ more teaching assistants, train them to work with children on a more individual basis *'because students with SEN could progress if they got more help'*. However, insufficient funding is an obstacle. The head teacher puts any extra cash she has to fund support and it has nearly all drained away due to the large number of students with SEN on special provision.

4.7.3 Panoptical Heights Primary School

This mixed community school is maintained by the Derbyshire Local Authority. The children's ages range from 3-11 years old and there are 391 pupils in total. Thirty-three pupils with SEN are supported through School Action Plus and twenty-eight through School Action. Most Children who attend this school lived in the same village or the surrounding area. Most are from White British backgrounds, with few belonging to minority ethnic backgrounds. They come from below average socio-economic backgrounds and the number of children entitled to free school meals is above average (Ofsted, 2008). The number of children with SEN is below average. Students are taught National Curriculum subjects. Key Stage 2 Test results for 2010 were not published for this school. The TA of pupils estimated to reach Level 4 or above in English was 81%, with 30% to achieve Level 5; The TA of Mathematics was 85% were estimated to manage Level 4 or above and 42% to reach Level 5, TA for Science estimated 98% to achieve Level 4 or above with 40% attaining Level 5.

The school supports a range of pupils with SEN, including Able, Talented and Gifted children. The monitoring system helps the school identify the individual needs of each child. Through tracking systems, pupils know their individual targets and the tasks which they are expected to accomplish. The SENCO claimed that professionals, the special needs teacher who spends two days a week in one to one sessions with children, the speech therapists for speech and language difficulties, and physiotherapists provide more academic rather than emotional support. In review meetings with the head teacher, they decide which children should be given priority. Drama workshops, dance and movement sessions are part of the school's intervention to motivate pupils to progress academically. Teaching and learning strategies encourage underachieving pupils to improve their writing and numeracy. The one-to-one sessions with a special teacher in and outside lessons can support the children's needs. Parents have the opportunity to discuss the academic plans that students with SEN have for each term with staff. One evening meeting per

term allows parents to discuss their children's progress using *individual educational plans,* and decide what the new targets will be. The school also sends parents the annual reports of the children's work for the academic year. These discuss individual progress and any problems children encounter in their lessons. For the social development of the children, the school organises extracurricular clubs and sports competitions. One to one sessions with learning mentors support behavioural needs. The SENCO explained that the general profile of special needs should be improved; SEN should become a bigger priority because

> Special needs children are very often seen as another job to do, something else to sort out so the teaching staff and parents will be involved more than they are. So, raising the profile of SEN and trying to meet the needs of these children is not to be seen as another job but as something very important.

4.7.4 Nova Spectrum Primary School

This independent and co-educational day school in Nottinghamshire is attended by children aged three to twelve. There are 68 pupils enrolled in this school and no children with SEN statements, but 10 children have been identified by the school as having significant learning disabilities or difficulties, mainly related to literacy and numeracy. The majority of the children are White British from an above average socioeconomic background (Ofsted, 2008). The school does not have a mainstream management system. As there is no head teacher, the College of Teachers decides on the education programme. Teachers, along with parents and friends, make up the Associative Leadership responsible for the management of the school. The involvement of parents in the life of school is greatly encouraged; they organise social events and creative activities for fostering companionship and team work. The school's teaching-learning and Steiner/Waldorf curriculum are based on Rudolf Steiner's educational philosophy; teaching a main theme in depth for years 2-7 which lasts for three to four weeks. Other lessons like clay work, art, acting, music, poetry, mathematics, eurhythmy, PE and English make up the remainder of the curriculum. Children stay with the same teacher throughout their schooling.

The school's main focus is a balanced curriculum where children learn according to their needs and skills at different developmental stages. Depending on the subject, cross-curricular learning can enrich children's learning in main lessons. A spiral approach is followed in teaching and learning through which children revisit issues progressively over time. According to Steiner (1965:11) the right foundation for education and for teaching is based upon the knowledge that human nature develops differently at different ages. For example, teaching and learning for 9 year old children emphasises feelings and aesthetics, whereas for 13 year olds, the same subject would be experienced through logic and reason. National tests are not seen as productive and normative assessment allocating levels is considered inappropriate. Summative methods are not part of Steiner's pedagogy. Assessment is through teacher's formative feedback on homework and lesson tasks. The teachers know the strengths and weaknesses of each child throughout their

developmental stages. Steiner (2000) emphasises the importance of tracking each child's progress and arranging pedagogical meetings for issues of educational, social and emotional development. Parents receive annual reports of the work accomplished over the academic year. Reports include insightful observations into individual progress based on different aspects of development. In this school, the child needs to concentrate in order to manage his tasks individually. At the collective level, there is a sense of togetherness. Each child acts with other children to enjoy activities, helping each other with school work, participating in extra-curricular activities, preparing social events, singing and working together on the land. Learning and practice is central to children's education to support their social and cultural growth. In the following section, details of the participants of this study are provided.

4.8 Participants

4.8.1 Selection of participants

My sample of participants was *purposive* (Miles & Huberman, 1984) that is, participants who could best answer my research questions and teachers who worked with them and could share their experiences and perspectives. But I could not fully determine who they would be at the beginning, that is, the final number of children or teachers to be involved in my research as I followed the grounded theory approach whereby the need to collect new data leads the researcher to recruit more sites and participants (Boeije, 2002).

4.8.2Characteristics of participants

4.8.2.1The teachers

The teachers in the study were informed about the purpose of my research project by the head teacher of each school. None of the names used to refer to the teachers or pupils are their real names, all are pseudonyms to preserve anonymity. All four teachers agreed to participate and their help was valuable to decide which lessons to observe for an understanding of pupils' interactions and deciding which pupils would best fit the interests of my study. Danny and Bam were observed at Sunny Hill School. Danny in his thirties, a recently qualified teacher had been teaching year 4/5 in this school for two years. Previously, he had been a basketball coach for small, local athletics teams. Bam, in her fifties, had been teaching year 6 and working at this school for eight years. She had always worked as a teacher in primary schools.

In the Panoptical Heights School, Cas , in his mid-forties was the year 5 teacher and had worked in this school for at least four years. He had previously worked for several years in another primary school in the same district.

At Nova Spectrum School, the teacher, code-named Bob, in his mid-forties, had worked in this school for more than ten years and during my observations was

teaching year 4/5. He had previously worked as an Art therapist and later trained to teach children according to Steiner's education system (1997).

***Table 4.5* Teacher information**

Name	Age	Gender	School
Danny	30	M	Sunny Hill/y. 4/5
Bam	50	F	Sunny Hill/y.6
Cas	45	M	Panoptical Heights/y.5
Bob	45	M	Nova Spectrum/y.4/5

4.8.2.2The students with SEN

My participants with SEN were four students from each of the three schools with mild to moderate SEN aged 11-12 years old (see Table 4.6). All the students attended mainstream schools and were in mainstream classes with support from a teaching assistant in the classroom and with withdrawal sessions for Literacy and Numeracy. The selection of students was based on the teachers' choices taking into account that students had to have the necessary cognitive and language capabilities to express their attitude to specific issues in interviews, to remember past incidents and to converse with others in the same group. The parents of the children and the children themselves provided informed consent prior to the interviews and observations. Students are identified by pseudonyms.

***Table 4.6* Student information**

Name	Age	Gender	Disability	School	Support
Harris	12	M	MLD*	Sunny Hill/y. 4/5	TA-In class
Zen	12	M	GDD*	Sunny Hill/y.6	TA-In class
Sam	11.5	M	EBD*	Panoptical Heights/y.5	TA-In class
Carla	11	F	Dyslexia/Dyspraxia	Nova Spectrum/y.4/5	TA-outside

*Note: *MLD, Moderate Learning Difficulty /GDD, Global Developmental Delay, EBD, Emotional/Behavioural Disorder*

The lessons in which the students and teachers were observed and tape-recorded are presented next.

4.8.3 Observations of lessons

My presence in the four classrooms where I first made field notes and tape-recordings was three to four months during the spring and summer terms of the academic year 2009-2010. I attended lessons where children worked individually or in mixed ability groups to observe any differences in the ways teachers conducted these lessons for children with SEN compared to the mixed ability afternoon lessons. Another reason was to establish a rounded view of how lessons worked in the classrooms for children with SEN and how their inclusion was accomplished. In the morning, the teachers in Sunny Hill and Panoptical Heights taught Literacy and Mathematics and encouraged individual work. Most of the lessons where children with SEN worked in mixed ability groups were in the afternoon, after the lunch break. Observing afternoon lessons showed me how children interacted with each other in shared tasks.

In Nova Spectrum School, I observed part of the morning classes and the afternoon lessons where all the children attended class together. The Year 4/5 classroom employed a multimodal perspective in teaching and learning which exposed the children to a number of different experiences like computer use, drawing, construction, farming, language and literacy through drama and storytelling, creative development, social development and knowledge of the world. The teachers gave children the opportunity to observe plants, the weather and animals while they were learning science and zoology. Learning was facilitated through educational trips. During the period of my observations, children used a wide range of media, i.e. paint, clay, pens, brushes, watercolours, paper, rulers and wood trays. This multimedia approach to learning was a new experience for me.

The lessons to observe was decided by the class teacher and involved individual and group orientated tasks with more emphasis on the former. As I wanted to establish a good relationship with the teachers and the children, I observed the interactions in these particular lessons. I attended the lessons of each teacher, once or twice per week, depending on their timetable. I also kept notes on the communication of children in the playground during break time.

The following classrooms were observed in each school.

Sunny Hill

~Danny's classroom, year 4/5: Mathematics, Geography, Art, ICT
~Bam's classroom, year 6: Science, Art

Panoptical Heights

~Cas's classroom, year 5: Science, Art, Mathematics

Nova Spectrum

~Bob's classroom, year 4/5: Mathematics, Music, Drawing, Sculpture, Drama, Myth to Literature, Narrative tradition

In the next section, the selection of methods for conducting this research is discussed.

4.9 Selection of methods

In order to study the inclusion of students with SEN in the mainstream classroom, observations were conducted in the lessons and during breaks, supplemented by qualitative interviews with students and teachers. The process of observing students and studying the nonverbal stimuli in the school environment supports a 'multiperspectival' (Cohen et al., 2007), methodological approach due to the complexity of the process of inclusion and of the positioning of students with SEN in the classroom. The employment of multiple methods enables a holistic view of inclusion examining multiple causalities and perspectives and taking into account the different views of participants.

4.10 Qualitative research techniques

4.10.1 Participant observation

In terms of methodology, there is a shift from looking at the causal interpretation of social phenomena to their understanding and therefore, there is a preference towards the qualitative methods for collecting, processing and analysing data. The method of observation is the most appropriate, as emphasis is placed on the role of the subject as an active actor in everyday communication and school reality.The technique for observing students in class and at school in general, is observation, in particular, participant observation. Participatory observation is when the researcher is present in the context of study and has been used more than any other technique in qualitative research (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002: vii). Social phenomena are studied as they occur in their natural environment; they are not transferred to the laboratory as in experiments or reproduced through questionnaires.

The success of participatory observation depends on the researcher's skills in 'informal interviewing, writing detailed field notes, and...patience' (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002: vii). The main methodological difference of observation in relation to other methodological techniques, such as questionnaires and interviews, is that, while in the other techniques the data collection is based on the descriptions and the responses of subjects to the research questions, in observation, the data collection is based on the descriptions and measurements the researcher provides as an eye-witness of the incidents. In this way, the qualitative researcher develops an 'empathetic understanding' and tries to understand the participants from their viewpoints, beliefs and intentions, which Weber (1968) called 'verstehen', a 'method of empathetic understanding of other's viewpoints, meanings, intentions, and cultural beliefs.' (Johnson & Christensen, 2010:36)

Participant observation as a method for data production relates to an ontological approach which emphasises the interactions, actions, behaviour and ways through which people interpret these and act on them. Moreover, there is an epistemological position which suggests that knowledge or the objective elements of the social world can be reproduced through observation or participation or experience of interactive situations. The researcher's view on how to construct social explanations highlights the depth and complexity of data (Mason, 2003). Data collection throughout the research focuses the researcher's attention to the questions which emerge from the study. Observation can end when 'theoretical saturation' occurs - the additional data collected cease to enrich the existing conceptual categories, which are simply repeated (Glaser & Strauss, 1967:61),

> The criterion for judging when to stop sampling the different groups pertinent to a category is the category's theoretical saturation. Saturation means that no additional data are being found whereby the sociologist can develop properties of the category.

Throughout my research, written descriptions in the form of field notes (see example in Appendix A) were made during and immediately after the observations and I reflected on problems that arose during the observations concerning the appropriateness of the procedures and their impact on the results (Lindlof & Taylor, 2010:9). In ethnographic research the researcher spends considerable time looking into the lives of the participants in order to describe the meanings of phenomena for those who are studied in order to understand the cultural aspects of their lives, attitudes and motivations (Murchison, 2010). *How much and in what ways should the participant observer become involved in participants' activities?* (Adler 1996).

She can be a *complete observer* and not engage in activities with participants or a *participant observer* fully involved in the activities of the setting whereby her behaviour is not significantly different from the participants' behaviour (Gold, 1958). I chose to be somewhere in the middle (Adler & Adler, 1994). For example, at the beginning of the fieldwork, I kept my distance as everyone needed time to get used to my presence. After the first interactions with teachers and children, I started participating in their daily activities. Towards the end of my data collection, I participated less as I did not wish to forget the objectives of my study. My purpose was to understand communication from the children's perspectives, so I spent more time with the children and less with teachers. I informed teachers about the focus of my research on children's interactions as I did not want to jeopardise my communication with them. I thus included observations of their interactions with children in group activities and involved them in face to face interviews. Participating in activities with children and teachers was an effective way to establish trust and a good rapport for generating data and promoting the objectives of my project (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

However, the observational researcher should try to make her presence as near invisible as possible in the setting where she observes participants in order to reduce her impact on their behaviours (Shaffer, 1993). Shaffer (1993) suggests videotaping to observe behaviour or interactions with children since it is easier to accustom participants to the presence of the researcher and is less likely to change their behaviour. This issue is discussed in the next section.

4.10.2 In-lesson, tape-recorded conversations

While observing the interactions of SEN children with their peers, I found it useful to record some of their conversations during mixed ability tasks in different lessons (for example, see Appendix F). Conversations were tape recorded after a month, when I felt the children and teachers were more used to my presence. The first time I used my tape recorder in the classrooms at Sunny Hill and Panoptical Heights was difficult as the children were curious about the device and its purpose. I explained their conversations would help me understand their communication and asked them to talk and act as naturally as possible as everything on the tape would be used for the purpose of my study, but anonymously and in confidence (section 4.18.2).

After some sessions, I observed they paid less attention to the tape recorder while working together. Tape recorded conversations gave me access to rich information about communication developed in natural circumstances. I selected the extracts of conversations for analysis I thought were the richest examples in relation to the research question.

4.10.3 Interviews

The research interview refers to the discussion of two people, with an interviewer specifically aiming to obtain research-related information and focusing on the content-defined goals of the research with systematic description, prediction or interpretation. The use of the interview is an important means of collecting information, providing access to what the participant thinks or remembers and can be used to test hypotheses and combined with other methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:452). 'Interviews record what an interviewer draws out, what the interviewee remembers, what he or she chooses to tell, and how he or she understands what happened, not the "unmediated facts" of what happened in the past.' With reference to the interview as a research tool, there are four main types:

- the 'structured/standardized or formal',
- 'semi-structured',
- 'unstructured/non-standardized or
- informal' interviews

Unstructured/non-standardised interviews were used in this research. The interviews consolidated the relationships with the teachers and the TAs; they were not used just as a tool for extracting genuine information or for eliciting the actual beliefs and attitudes of the teachers. What the participants expressed during their interviews depended on how they perceived both the investigator and the objectives of this research; how they interpreted the questions and the image they wished to present (Keegan, 2009). This does not mean they intended to deceive the interviewer but they might have tried to give the version of the information they believed was the most appropriate (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). However, during the interview, some hints emerged that opened new perspectives and directions. The researcher tried to identify these and oriented the research to the new direction. Although the interview may be costly and time consuming, it was an effective technique to approach the views and experiences of participants (Babbie, 2010:318),

> Unlike a survey, a qualitative interview is an interaction between an interviewer and a respondent in which the interviewer has a general plan of inquiry, including the topics to be covered, but not a set of questions that must be asked with particular words and in a particular order.

It is more accurate to refer to data production rather than data collection in interviews because most qualitative research approaches reject the idea that the

researcher is a completely neutral collector of information about the social world. The main features of qualitative interviews are (Mason, 2003):

- an informal style consistent with a conversation, discussion;
- a thematic, biographical, narrative approach to the problem by the investigator;
- the production of data through the interaction of interviewer and interviewee

The researcher emphasised the depth, complexity and overall nature of social phenomena and considered herself an active and reflexive factor in the research process (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). Qualitative interviewing enabled the researcher to interact with the social reality under investigation (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002). The relationship between the interviews and observations was complementary as elicited information from the interviews was then extended through observations and vice versa. This enabled the researcher to control the data collected as she could not monitor everything that happened in the environment in her absence which might be significant for the study (Keegan, 2009). The interpretations of events by the teachers, the motives that induced specific behaviour, the conclusions about the motives of others and the feelings that caused specific situations identified through interviews were compared with the interpretations and conclusions of the researcher and what happened during observations (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002:104).

In conclusion, the qualitative interview techniques for this study were based on the subjects of this research - students and teachers - the nature of the questions being investigated, for a theory to emerge, not confirmed. A type of qualitative, semi-structured interview, the focus group, which has been used in this study, is discussed next.

4.10.4 Focus groups

Focus groups in depth interviews are conducted with homogeneous groups. Homogeneity pertains to the background of the respondents, which if it differentiates them too much, will affect the process of the discussion (Morgan, 1997:36),

> The group composition should ensure that the participants in each group both have something to say about the topic and feel comfortable saying it to each other. Participants must feel able to talk to each other, and wide gaps in social background or lifestyle can defeat this requirement. Note, however, that the goal is homogeneity in background and not homogeneity in attitudes. If all the participants share virtually identical perspectives on a topic, this can lead to a flat, unproductive discussion.

The focus group is a 'carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions of a defined environment' (Kreuger, 1998:88). Their importance lies in the interactions

of the participants that develop through discussion (Kitzinger, 1995). In this study, focus groups enabled full engagement with the talk of the children, especially when voice recording was allowed. (Otherwise, I had to write everything down while also facilitating the discussion). Body language and facial expressions were also recorded as data during conversation for use in interpretation and analysis. Recordings from focus groups were difficult to transcribe when children talked simultaneously or over each other, so reducing the quality of conversational data (Blaxter et al., 2006). The questions were in an open-ended format to give them the opportunity to interact and exchange ideas on issues they found important.

Smithson (2007) suggests that focus groups could be viewed as a performance where participants and facilitator take their own positions in the discussion. The ideas that participants exchange should be viewed as constructed in social situations and which emerge at the time of the discussion. The strength of this tool is in the collective ways through which participants develop their ideas. The voices are collective in the sense that participants develop a shared perspective on an issue as opposed to individual voices which may try to dominate discussions (Smithson & Diaz, 1996). Dominant voices are a limitation of focus group methodology if some participants try to dominate the others. When participants exchange views in discussion, the facilitator can go beyond the study of participants' attitudes to the ways different beliefs are produced by groups (Smithson, 2007). The impact of the researcher as moderator on participants must be taken into account; my ethnicity, age, education and social background could affect group interaction (Edwards, 1996) and also instigate power differences with the participants (Morgan, 1988). Regarding the analysis and interpretation of my focus groups data, my aim was to represent participants' perspectives and evaluations (Morgan & Kreuger, 1998).

In each school students were selected using *purposive sampling*, related to the topic under study (Rubin & Babbie, 2010), by their teachers. The students of 10-11 years old were involved in the focus groups of this study as they were going through the process of socialisation and were capable of identifying the views of others around them and of communicating their own thoughts and evaluations with insight and sophistication (Maybin, 2006; Roedder, 1999). This was very important for my research objectives, as I needed to delve into how they understand and evaluate their social world with emphasis on their interactions with school peers.

Three focus groups came from Sunny Hill, i.e. two groups without SEN and one with SEN, two from Panoptical Heights and two from Nova Spectrum. The focus groups included one group with children with SEN and another without SEN so each group of students could develop their views in a comfortable way about specific SEN children in the classroom. Second, I needed to explore the kind of views children with SEN and children without SEN developed separately about their communication with each other. The number of focus groups was determined by the point when I felt that the comments of the children in each group began to be repeated and there was little point in continuing to collecting further data (Table 4.7). Furthermore, teachers found it disruptive when I took children out for interviews too often.

Table 4.7 **Focus Groups at the three schools**

	Sunny Hill School	Panoptical Heights School	Nova Spectrum School
Focus group	3	2	2
Year	4/5 and 6	5	4/5
SEN	1	1	1
Non-SEN	2	1	1

At Sunny Hill, two focus groups of children participated. One group without SEN from year 4/5 and 6 and a group of students with SEN from years 4/5 and 6 since the number of students with SEN was small in the two classes. In Panoptical Heights, there was one focus group with SEN and one without SEN from year 5. Nova Spectrum School had two focus groups, one with SEN and one without SEN. The size of the focus group was kept small to facilitate the participation of all children in the discussion and to make it easier for them to elaborate on their views (Blaxter et al., 2010). According to Rubin and Babbie (2010:469), 'typically 5 to 15 people are brought together'. However, the small number of students enabled me to observe which children dominated the discussion and how they expressed their opinions (Bloor et al., 2001). It also meant that I could manage the behaviour of the children during the discussion. The groups of four students allowed them to argue and challenge each other's views, giving me the chance to observe their interactions. It was easier to transcribe the audio taped conversations of these small groups. Each focus group lasted about forty to fifty minutes during school hours. A topic guide was used to specify the themes while new and unexpected themes also emerged (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). Children developed arguments through their interactions and specific positions in their analysis of the topics discussed. The questions included their notion of the character of a good student, views on individual and group oriented lessons, interactions and friendships with peers, feelings when experiencing interactions with peers with and without SEN (see Appendix D).

4.10.5 Semi-structured qualitative interviews with teachers and teaching assistants

The interview topic guide for teachers and teaching assistants (see Appendix B) was used to organise a list of topics to cover in order to collect data for my research questions (Lupton, 1996). Interview questions referred to the specific practices teachers and teaching assistants used for supporting the academic and emotional needs of children with SEN, the communication of children with SEN with their peers and how classroom tasks facilitated their interactions and finally, any suggestions they had for improving current strategies. Teachers and teaching assistants provided insights into specific incidents about the communication of children with SEN and their peers in and outside the classroom and reconstructed specific events which corroborated observations, or students' focus groups.

During the interviews, as a non-native speaker, I tried to be precise and clear in articulating the questions so the respondents could understand them clearly. It was easier for me to understand the responses from the tape-recorded interviews.

However, in Nova Spectrum, I kept notes of the teacher's interview as he did not allow me to use a tape recorder. I was careful to write down the actual words he used so that the meaning would remain the same. After the interview the teacher helped by checking my notes of his responses. I was careful during the analysis and coding of the interviews to avoid any preconceptions intervening at any stage to avoid the meanings being lost. I also used probe questions to clarify what the interviewees meant. I made every effort to consider various possible interpretations of the meanings of their responses.

Table 4.8 summarises the advantages and disadvantages of the methods employed in my study.

***Table 4.8* Overview of comparative strengths and weaknesses of methods of collection**

Methods of collection	Strengths	Weaknesses
Observations	• Observing events in real time • Observing the context • Describe what is happening in all its intricacy • Observe participants as they behave in their natural setting	• Challenge to keep detailed notes on everything • Researcher's preconceptions within observations • Researcher spends many hours in the field • Researcher selects the events for observation • Researcher immersed into the world of the participants • Researcher might influence the behaviour of participants being observed
In-lesson, tape-recorded conversations	• Recording interactions of children as they develop naturally in the classroom	• Disruptive for the teacher and children, i.e. attention, natural behaviour
Semi-structured Interviews	• Interviewing in natural setting • Richness and spontaneity of responses • Respondents could provide important insights into a situation • Flexibility-the researcher could ask participants to reconstruct some events in their minds in order to identify other sources of evidence • Search deeper the subjective responses of the participants on a topic	• Interviewer might not be unbiased and objective • Researcher who is a non-native speaker must be precise, specific and clear in expressing the questions • Variability in respondent's answers could be due to interview structure, participants' poor recall and poor articulation and researcher's poor articulation of questions
Focus Groups	• Collecting information in a less artificial way, i.e. discussion • Using natural groupings of people who know each other so the discussion is as natural as possible • Participants raise issues they see as significant • New and unexpected insights might emerge through conversation • Taking into account the interactions, its forms and impact within the group • Exploring arguments with participants and the reasons that lie behind them • Researcher could identify the positions participants develop in their interactions	• Limited control over the running of interview • Participants might influence each other's the views • Difficult to identify themes from what participants say and how they interact • Difficult to transcribe participants' voices talking at the same time • Challenging for a non native speaker to transcribe participants' talk • Time-consuming transcription of recordings

Visual resources	• Could be sources of data in their own right • Represents the non-verbal aspect of communication • Image is a way of looking into participants' reality • Convey important characteristics about the case to others • Flexibility-multiple interpretations of images	• Researcher could influence what is photographed • Researcher's bias could affect the interpretation of images • For the interpretation of images, the researcher should be sensitive to the context within which the sources were produced, to participants' meanings and to her own social position • Raises ethical issues, i.e. invasion of privacy

I will now reflect on the problems encountered during the fieldwork and the challenges of using specific research methods for conducting my research in the three schools. For my classroom research, I used NVivo 8 software (see Section 4.13.1) as an organisational tool to facilitate the organisation of my recorded data.

In the next section, I discuss issues of reliability, validity and authenticity regarding my study.

4.11 Evaluation criteria

4.11.1 Validity/Credibility and Reliability/Trustworthiness

The concepts of validity and reliability in research are usually considered within quantitative research logic and measurement. Instrumentation should be valid and reliable. An instrument has validity when it measures what it is supposed to measure and is reliable when it produces the same results by measuring the same thing repeatedly. Reliability shows the stability of measurements, while validity indicates the test measures what is intended to measure (Rubin & Babbie, 2009:82-83). The basic criteria for the validity of a study are that it is *objective*, *systematic* and *reproducib*le by other researchers to get similar results. It should be *empirically* measurable without subjectivity in interpretations, and *published* for research outcomes to be accessed by other researchers (Pathak, 2008:2). *Internal* validity refers to the confidence that irrelevant variables have been controlled and *external* validity in research design refers the conditions which allow the researcher to make generalizations based on the results of investigation. Some potential risks to external validity are the lack of sample representativeness, an artificial environment (in some experimental studies, for instance), the intervention of multiple effects (Shi, 2008:174).

Reliability is also achieved if the results are same using different tools to measure the characteristic under investigation, as well as the homogeneity of responses to different questions on the same scale of measurement. A measurement tool is not valid if it is unreliable, but reliability does not imply validity; a tool might show stability and cohesion, but might not represent the characteristic it was supposed to identify (Rubin & Babbie, 2009:83). Several methods for producing qualitative data are not standard and researchers who use qualitative research do not apply reliability tests, because the data they produce cannot fit the form of a clearly

standard set of measurements. However, they need to demonstrate that the production and analysis of their data was a) appropriate for the specific research b) was thorough, careful, honest and accurate - the data were appropriately presented and there was no carelessness and untidiness in their recording and analysis (Mason, 2003:326).

The validity of data analysis can be demonstrated through the validity of the methods for data production and the validity of interpretation. In the first case, it is important that the logic of the method is in line with the type of research questions formulated and the social explanations provided. In the validity of interpretation, the researcher needs to explain how the data were interpreted and furthermore, how different pieces of data interweave. The validity of the interpretation is strengthened by the researcher's ability to show how the interpretation is powered by her analytic lens and to explain why other interpretations are less convincing than the one selected. The conclusion is that the validity of the method and the validity of interpretation need to be proved through careful reconstruction and representation of the process (Mason, 2003:331-337). High quality qualitative social research depends on the researcher selecting a 'worthy topic', with 'rich rigor', 'sincerity', 'credibility', 'resonance', making a 'significant contribution', with 'ethics' and 'meaningful coherence' (Tracy, 2010:839). These criteria provide the context within which qualitative methodologists from different paradigms can learn and interact. In this research as far as possible I began the research with as little prejudice and bias as possible. The study's validity is based on collecting accurate data and avoiding errors and bias likes over-guidance of the respondents to provide the desired answers.

For validity it is important to check that responses have been interpreted to reflect the original. In my case, my interaction with children in school and my involvement in various activities with them enabled me to check whether the interpretations of their responses were valid (Crozier & Tracey, 2000). Grounded theory, the use of constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987) enhances the internal and external validity of a study. Internal validity requires identifying the commonalities and differences in behaviour, perspectives, incidents that exist within the phenomenon under study. For the external validity of a homogeneous sample, participants are selected as representative of the phenomenon under study (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This allows generalisation of the concepts and their relationship to units absent from the sample but which represent the same phenomenon.

The present study attempted to accurately present the views and positions, attitudes and perceptions of the participants by showing the significance of the research outcomes for similar cases and research areas and identifying the theoretical and interpretative framework of research so that it could explain broader phenomena. The researcher must identify whether a theory about a phenomenon produced under specific conditions could be applied to new situations. It is argued that a theory about social phenomena cannot be easily reproduced as new conditions cannot match exactly the original conditions under which a phenomenon

has been identified (Boeije, 2002). However, grounded theory establishes the possibility of generalisation if conditions are specified, variations in data are discovered and theoretical sampling is systematic (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), i.e. the researcher knows what data to collect next and where to collect them on the basis of theoretical ideas. The reliability of my research depends, to some extent, upon how far the responses represent what interviewees really believe about the topic under study.

It should be noted that, with the inevitable sense of personal contribution to this research, objectivity was not the main purpose. Academic philosophers deny the possibility that someone or a method can be completely objective, and contend that this ultimately depends on whether the reader will be convinced about the intellectual and methodological consistency, significance, value and utility of the results (Patton, 2002:576). In this study, maintaining ethical standards, i.e. confidentiality, anonymity, in the design and development of the research study, ensuring its validity and reliability and constantly behaving impartially as a researcher, were all to avoid as much as possible any subjective views and/or interference in the research process. I collected different kinds of data through my interactions with children which I had to ensure were valid/credible. I considered the validity of their responses, as children might not respond to the question posed, but be referring to something else (Lewis, 2001; 2002). For example, they might be asked about lesson preferences and instead respond about their preferences regarding group and individual activities in lessons. For this reason, questions sometimes had to be phrased in a different way.

4.11.2 Authenticity

My research involved children with SEN so the need to check the authenticity of the context within which their perspectives were observed was essential. I needed to check the children's views were reflected in an authentic manner. One way was to compare responses across different contexts and through diverse means of communication, i.e. gaze, gesture, body posture. I tried to present the views of the children as closely as possible to the original communicative act, taking into account factors that might have influenced their responses. For instance, the impact of the presence of teachers and other children in the setting where focus groups and observations were conducted, noises inside and outside the classroom, the rules for conducting focus groups, were some of the factors I considered for their possible impact on authenticity (Messiou, 2002).

4.11.3 My case studies and the issue of generalisation

The role of my case study was to investigate and compare the pedagogic practices, discourses and verbal and non-verbal behaviours of the teachers and students in their particular classrooms in order to gain insights into what seemed to contribute to best and not so good practice. The teachers and students' experiences and positions of the particular classroom discourses were studied as situated in specific times, contexts and conditions. The in-depth, systematic and descriptive (Dyer,

1995) investigation and analysis of the case study data enabled me to understand the conditions and processes that facilitate or hinder inclusion in the specific classroom settings as they emerged naturally (Robson, 1993). However, this is a small-scale study, involving a small sample of classrooms and participants, so the intention is not to generalise from the findings to other research subjects and settings. However, the results of specific case studies 'catch unique features that may otherwise be lost in larger scale data (e.g. surveys) [and] are strong in reality' (Nisbet & Watt, 1984, cited in Cohen et al., 2007:256). Each observed classroom had its own distinctive characteristics particular to that specific time and context and produced both similarities and differences, to the other schools and classrooms studied. While the findings are context-bound and specific to the case study they can provide insights for future research questions in other classrooms and schools.

4.12 Reflecting on the study's methods and my role

Some research methods are more suitable than others for the research context and the structure of particular research (Christensen & James, 1999). The important point is that the methods selected are appropriate for the participants, the cultural and social context in which it is conducted and the research questions of the study (Woodhead & Faulkner, 1999). In order to understand and present a true account of children's interactions, a researcher has to be familiar with the local practices through active contribution to the cultural practices used by the children, i.e. their communication code, conceptual meaning-making and interactions (Christensen, 1999:76). It is necessary to use techniques which echo the children's interests so they can express their own perspectives on the issues.

Children's meaning making and how they respond to the conditions of their school life were investigated using participant observation and focus groups (Christensen & James, 1999). Research with children does not require specific methods tailored to their needs. Similar to adults, children can participate in interviews, respond to questionnaires and support the researcher in the role of participant observer. Implicit in my presumptions was the idea that children can express their own viewpoints (Alderson, 1995) and are capable of taking decisions and being active social actors in the making of their social world (James & Pout, 1995). Focus groups were appropriate for studying children as social actors in the schools, giving them voice. Children learn to comply with rules without being critical about what they experience unless they are asked to comment (James & Prout, 1990). The focus groups engaged the children in open discussions about how they experience their interactions with children with SEN and how they experience school. The children seemed to enjoy taking part as they exchanged ideas and challenged each other's perspectives. It gave me a great opportunity to discover their views on the inclusion of peers with SEN in a natural way and to observe their behaviour during discussions.

Similarly, participant observations allowed me to become involved in various activities with children to help me understand how they think about specific issues. At first, the children and teachers were unsure of my purposes but my long term

presence and interaction with them made them more comfortable. Semi-structured interviews with teachers enabled me to address general questions which were discussed in an open way.

The photos taken in the classrooms were enlightening as they captured dimensions of reality in the classroom, i.e. posters, drawings, classroom layout, spatial organisation, seating arrangements, furniture, and objects. They were part of the school's daily routine and a broad reflection of each school's approach to education. Furthermore, visual images were one of the tools which mediated the positioning and identification of children in different roles in the classroom, as for example, at Sunny Hill, a poster communicated the hierarchy of management roles in the classroom to the students. My chosen techniques enabled me to systematically explore the subjects of my project and generate rich and in-depth data to respond to the questions of the study.

4.12.1 My research subjectivity and its effect on the study's findings

Qualitative researchers can be tempted generate data based on what they find interesting instead of what actually happened. My bias, social background, values, beliefs, or ideology might have influenced the ways I was looking at the data. However, this danger was minimised through the various qualitative methods used in the research, I was in each school for at least three months. The rigorous process of collecting and interpreting data enabled me to make detailed accounts of each classroom and the participants. Detailed field notes and reflection in my research journal presented multiple aspects and interpretations of the classrooms under investigation; social phenomena are complex in nature and there are multiple subjectivities. In this way, biases were confronted and limited as I tried to remain open to the emergence of the new data (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

4.12.2 The effect of my presence on the participants' behaviour

Another challenge was the effect of my intrusion on the students and teachers' worlds. I mitigated this influence by interacting with the participants as much as possible, in an unobtrusive way. My participation in the daily activities of the students minimised the effect of my presence on how they responded. The qualitative interviews were conducted in a natural manner in the form of a conversation rather than a question-answer style (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). I felt welcome in the schools and had the chance to converse with teachers and children from other classes, which was very enlightening for my research. However, I encountered a number of problems with children connected to my role as a researcher.

4.12.3 The difficulty of my role as a researcher

During my fieldwork in the classroom, I took notes and recorded what I observed and heard unobtrusively and maintained, as far as possible, a neutral position. I was a researcher but also an assistant who occasionally helped the children with their

learning tasks. I had a friendly attitude towards the teachers and children and they were very helpful and supportive of my work. At first, teachers and children looked at me curiously when I was taking notes and sometimes children asked what I was writing about. The teacher in Nova Spectrum felt uncomfortable with my noting what he was doing in the classroom and sometimes felt the need to justify his actions. My field notes were open to his criticism if he felt something was not expressed clearly. At times he clarified details of the activities and their purpose and provided me with richer information about them. The only problem with my access at Nova Spectrum was the teacher's refusal to allow me to tape-record his interview and the focus group interviews with the children.

Another obstacle I confronted occurred during my fieldwork in Panoptical Heights. The Head and the teacher and children of year 5 welcomed me and were always supportive of my work. However, my presence in the playground stimulated the curiosity of children from other classes, especially year 6. A group of 11 year olds wanted to know what I was doing in their school and why I was carrying a book and a pencil and writing about them. I explained that I was working for my research and collecting information about their school. They discussed the way I dressed and talked while I was sitting in the playground. My first thought was that they were interested in a person from another country and wanted to know more about my cultural background. They asked questions regarding my personal life, my country and language. After two weeks the same group of children started to make embarrassing statements about the Greek language and started to swear in English. They laughed and joked. I tried to explain I was there to work and I needed to concentrate, but if they had questions about my country or language I would be happy to answer them. Every time I was in the playground they came up to me and made gestures. At those times I moved next to the Teaching Assistant in the playground watching the children. When the TA asked me if everything was alright, I said that everything was fine.

In the second month in the playground, children from other classes came to ask my name and talk to me. I had been ignoring what the group of children from year 6 was doing and halfway through the second month, they stopped coming near me and played on the other side of the playground. Maybe these children had few opportunities to socialise with people from other countries at their school. The last Ofsted report advised the school to help students gain a clear insight into cultural diversity by raising the issue of diversity through the curriculum and increasing their experience and understanding of community groups not represented in their local area. Year 5 children were very caring and gentle, not like year 6. However, I felt that maintaining a friendly attitude towards the children and concentrating on my work helped me overcome this obstacle.

4.12.4 Reflective fieldnotes

In my descriptive field notes, emphasis was placed on biases, ideas, and problems of maintaining consistency during the process of collecting, coding and analysing the data. At the end of each fieldnote, another set of notes, the *memos* (Glaser &

Strauss, 1967), added further comments, speculations and experiences of the data collected. Memos enabled me to reflect on the themes that first developed in my data analysis and on the relationship between the initial categories and concepts which implied new themes and ideas. Field notes also commented on the efficiency of the methods employed and potential solutions and issues of rapport with the participants. My more than three months stay with the teachers and the students helped me confront my thoughts and assumptions about their behaviour, and question my interpretations of fieldwork, as is reflected in my fieldnotes (Hertz, 1995). Overall, my reflective fieldnotes facilitated the process of identifying my strengths and weaknesses in conducting the research but also helped me to use my preconceptions in a productive way (Campbell, 1995). I was able to use the reaction of participants to my presence in the field as a way of understanding the differences between my culture and my participants' culture by looking at how our values differ (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). In my project, the reflective process entailed questioning my data interpretation when I reported to my supervisors and discussed my analysis with them. The rigorous nature of the reflexive process was further enhanced by taking into consideration the alternative interpretations my supervisors suggested in the process of data analysis (Davies, 1999).

The next section discusses the process of data analysis and the advantages and disadvantages of using NVivo8 for organising, analysing and coding the qualitative data of my project.

4.13 Qualitative data analysis

Data analysis was conducted during the process of data collection to see whether it was necessary to collect new data or test new hypotheses from the process of analysing existing data. All raw data, i.e. field notes, tape-recordings, visual displays were transcribed and some additional information was included which I failed to write down at an earlier point and which strengthened the objectivity of the study. The use of NVivo8 computer-based software for qualitative analysis, assisted data analysis.

4.13.1 How NVivo8 assisted with my grounded theory research project

This section describes how I used QSR-NVivo8 concurrently with the main grounded theory. This software enabled me to construct the design and sampling, to analyse data, and to move beyond a thick description of how communication between children with SEN and their peers is constructed in the classroom towards an explanatory model grounded in the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Strauss and Corbin's grounded theory approach (1990) was used as it 'is seen to be tied to conditions and context, hence reflecting a local and constructed 'reality' (Annells, 1997:123). It is also more flexible as '...people can find support in it for any ontology they wish' (MacDonald & Schreiber, 2001:44). Annells (in Birks & Mills, 2011: 7) suggests that 'GT can be conducted within any qualitative paradigmatic position' to guide the process of the research.

Charmaz (Bryant & Charmaz,2007: 51) 're-positioned' grounded theory between a realist and interpretivist approach and points out the influence of the researcher on the interpretation of data collected, as the researcher represents the complex nature of reality at the same time as the participants' realities. In opposition, as Charmaz (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007) pointed out Glaser's (2005) critical realist position does not identify the impact of the role of researcher on the process of coding and interpreting data. For Glaser (2002), there is an external reality where data exist and researcher needs to allow them to emerge but not through developing further questions for discovering them. Strauss and Corbin (1994: 278-279) identify that 'Theories are always traceable to the data that gave rise to them...the analyst is also a crucially significant interactant'. They also pointed out that theory should be let to derive from data, and identified the 'creativity' of researcher 'in the ability...to aptly name categories, ask stimulating questions, make comparisons, and extract an innovative, integrated, realistic scheme from masses of unorganized raw data' (1998:p.13).

The decision to use grounded theory was based on my interest to systematically analyse the differences and similarities between data to develop a gradual, in-depth account of how my theoretical insights about the communication of children were produced (Barbour, 2001). A *grounded* theory is generated from new data to suggest the relationships between concepts in a methodical manner (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) 'what is going on' (Charmaz, 2010:308). The use of NVivo8 encourages the iterative process, i.e. moving back and forth between data collection and data analysis by keeping memos, coding and modelling. NVivo8 facilitated the process of organising and managing my data and augmented the analytical methods within grounded theory.

I recorded my first ideas as memos in my research journal. Since children with SEN face various academic and emotional problems at school, it was difficult for me to keep away from articles and studies pertaining to such problems. My engagement with ideas from other disciplines - developmental psychology, paediatrics, education were useful to broaden my knowledge of the field of SEN and stimulate new questions and ideas for interviews and focus groups (Charmaz, 2010). 'To what extent did my experiences and previous knowledge predetermine the data?' It would be untrue to claim I did not carry my own biases and previous knowledge into the process of collecting and analysing the data. As Charmaz (2010: 309) comments: 'The best we can do is to be aware of them and be wary lest they affect our work. In the end, the value of the method and how it is utilized lies in the final product.'

My research journal was important for transparency throughout the stages of coding and analysing data and for reflecting on the difficulties and problems I encountered throughout my fieldwork. I reflected on the impact of my role as a researcher on the participants and also checked my project's development (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; 1998). Importing my research journal in NVivo8 was useful as I could code my ideas within the journal as well. Throughout the process of entering my data in NVivo8, memos were attached to each set of main sources of data, i.e. interviews, focus groups, observations, tape-recorded conversations and

photographs. Memos were also attached to coding categories. NVivo8 facilitated *open/initial coding'*, i.e. producing the first codes and *axial coding*, i.e. comparing categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; 1998) to make links between them, and importing and analysing external audio files and photographs.

The software enabled me to link ideas, code, analyse and interpret the data and access the raw data behind the concepts. I was able to see the relationships between codes, categories and concepts, key to grounded theory (Weaver & Atkinson, 1994). Internal annotations, i.e. short comments, and external files, i.e. photographs, were attached to any document imported into the software. My internal annotations referred to any brief comments about something I wanted to discuss or explain in a transcript. Information about the text in transcripts was also produced in the form of memos coded directly. News reports and articles about the difficulties and assessment of children with SEN at the time of my data collection and analysis were also entered into NVivo8 as memos. These sources of information kept me updated about SEN at the time the data was produced. My reflections in my memos about readings and information from various fields helped me to control my knowledge about the problems children with SEN encounter in the educational setting, so that, my knowledge did not interfere in the way I coded and analysed participants' perspectives.

4.13.2 Coding

The systematic coding of data is essential for the development of theories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I started the coding process with *open coding*, by organising categories into non-hierarchical free nodes, studying the data to find similarities and differences and grouping the data to form categories which were later organised hierarchically in tree nodes. Specifically, open coding entails (Strauss & Corbin, 1990:74),

> the asking of questions about data; and the making of comparisons for similarities and differences between each incident, event and other instances of phenomena. Similar events and incidents are labelled and grouped to form categories

Node refers to the name assigned to each category. NVivo8 enabled me to move back and forth between the open coding of data, for example, to develop *gaze* as a category, and analyse data in depth, e.g. how gaze relates to the general concept of *peer communication*. Asking questions and comparing excerpts of interviews, focus groups, and field notes, excerpts of texts and codes and codes themselves, allowed me to compare the coding results and to develop concepts in a systematic manner (Lonkila, 1995). *Axial coding* is considering how a category with its subcategories relates to other categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This process reflects the transition from open to axial coding and the iterative nature of moving forth and back in coding (Lonkila, 1995). Deciding upon the names/nodes to give categories facilitated the process of thinking carefully about the most appropriate names for each category. For instance, I selected the node name *school's encouragement*

according *to ability* and *groupings on intellectual abilities* instead of using the language of the participants. This is a process that 'helps to preserve participants' meanings of their views and actions' (Charmaz, 2006:55). An example is the term *scaffolding down* which refers to the curriculum planning for low to top ability learners. This code allowed me to develop further ideas about some emerging concepts, i.e. *different access to curricular content, planning on ability, students' hierarchical classification*. My description of each node and the memo attached to each node assisted me in monitoring the consistent use of the nodes (Bazeley & Richards, 2000).

4.13.3 Memos

Throughout the qualitative data analysis, theoretical questions, comments and notes were kept in the form of memos and recovered when required. The creation of memos helped me to keep notes during the transcription of interviews, focus groups, field notes and photographs, to explore further what a code meant, to comment on a photograph important for the topic of the research, to describe important aspects of observations and question them. During the production of memos, I thought analytically about the developed concepts (Wiener, 2007:302), 'Memo writing allows the researcher to think through ideas about a category and its properties and to search for interrelationships with other emerging categories.' There was a memo for each node to explain why specific text segments were chosen and how the names of the nodes were produced. I elucidated the name of each category; I compared text segments and renamed or rejected categories so that I was able to observe the progress of my research and provide a transparent account (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) of how coding and analysis were generated.

4.13.4 Examining the data

During the first coding steps, I used the *text search query* several times to determine whether a concept had appeared in previously coded documents which I had neglected to code. For example, I developed the node *accepting diversity* within which the words *familiarisation, awareness* - being astute - and *alertness* - identifying a problem - appeared. Through *text search query* I searched for particular words in the interviews, focus groups and field notes and coded each occurrence at a specific node which I had previously missed; alternatively, I developed new nodes with attached memos. Another interesting operation of NVivo8 was the running of *coding stripes*, coloured bars that show the coding for a node and used in the process of axial coding as I looked for relationships between categories. Coding stripes helped me check whole documents or excerpts of texts and the nodes attached to specific sections of texts. This enabled me to compare concepts and categories by looking at visual representation of how the nodes developed and what relationships emerged (Bringer et al., 2006). The *tree structure* of nodes showed the nodes in a hierarchical order which made it easier to compare categories in relation to other categories (Bazeley & Richards, 2000). *Parent nodes* in NVivo8 represent higher order categories whereas *child nodes* signify the categories under the parent nodes.

For instance, one of the most referenced initial nodes after the first five field notes was *grouping on intellectual abilities*.

In order to understand how this node contributed to the interactions and communication of children with SEN and their peers in the classroom, I explored all the data coded at this node and applied coding stripes to investigate any relationships between other developing concepts. This enabled me to realise much of the data coded at *grouping on intellectual abilities* was also coded at *hierarchical classification*, *different access to curricular content* and *heterogeneity in class composition*. Through coding stripes, I also identified potential sources of grouping according to intellectual ability, which referred to *individualistic positioning of children*, *scaffolding down*, *and National Curriculum plan for top learners* and *school's encouragement for planning on ability*. Coding stripes allowed me to thoroughly explore the concepts and develop more questions which led to the production of emerging concepts and new categories (Hutchinson et al., 2010). Exploring coding stripes is a way of studying the relationships between categories that would later help to develop an explanatory model of the phenomenon under investigation (Bringer et al., 2006).

4.14.4 Theorizing

I utilised the *conditional/consequential matrix* to identify the inter-relationships between categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) while in the process of axial coding - linking categories to their subcategories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). According to Dey, (2007:179) *matrix* is a diagram used to investigate the conditions and consequences of the *core category* (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), that is, the main theme emerging from the data. The 'constant comparative method' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), allows the researcher to compare incidents within each category, make comparisons between categories and develop theory, generate concepts (Glaser, 2007). The core category was *school culture and communication*. Conditions were the contextual factors within which the core category developed - how far the school culture affected or did not affect communication, whether the school culture influenced children's identification and positioning in the communication and whether teachers' positioning affected children's communication. Consequences are the results of actions/interactions with the core category (Strauss & Corbin, 1998); for example, the actions of teachers that encouraged or inhibited the communication of children with SEN with their peers through teaching and learning practices. The matrix was used to study how conditions/consequences at an individual (micro) and societal (macro) level (Strauss & Corbin, 1998:181) were interrelated. I also used the matrix to identify any possible differences between the cultures of the three schools under study.

Through the development of paper-based conditional/consequential matrices, I identified concepts at the individual level that affected the communication of children, i.e. peers' perceptions of SEN, familiarisation with diversity, friendships, self-esteem, masculinity, femininity, poor academic performance and poor social skills, emotional functioning. Other factors like each school's pedagogic priorities;

teachers' attitudes; positioning of students within educational genres - individualistic vs. collective positioning in learning tasks - and student grouping on ability affected children's communication. On the macro/societal level, some factors like National Curriculum planning for top learners, performance of students in National Tests and position of schools in league tables, influenced part of the culture of each of the two state schools and children's positioning in their communication with peers with SEN. However, this was not the case in the independent Steiner school whose students followed Steiner's curriculum and did not participate in National Tests. The detachment of this school from the government-driven educational system and its autonomy in managing and providing the Steiner curriculum for students influenced the culture of this school and the positioning of children with SEN in their communication with other peers.

Throughout the process of developing concepts, my memos and the emerging concepts alerted me when *theoretical saturation* - the point where the theory needs no further development and no more data (Charmaz, 2010) – was complete. At this point, *theoretical sampling*, the process of sampling new settings - the Steiner school - to produce additional data to compare with the properties and relationships of existing categories (Charmaz, 2010) took place. *How could I be sure that theoretical saturation had occurred?* Charmaz (2006:114) explains 'we may claim saturation without being able to prove it' and identifies openness, intensity and clarity in the process of categorisation as vital for accomplishing saturation. Finally, in order to understand how the concepts fitted my data, I found it useful to note how my concepts related to each other (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Grounded theory tools helped me model my key concepts referring to the impact of school culture on children's positioning in their communication with peers with SEN and also how far any differences in the culture of each school affected the communication of children.

The strengths of this methodology are that all the transcribed data are revised throughout the analysis and categories emerge from the data analysis without reference to prior assumptions. Examples from transcribed data can empirically support the emergence of particular categories. Finally, the analysis of data does not rely on pre-established categories, which enables the discovery and emergence of new categories in the data.

4.15 Pros and cons of using NVivo8: its role in my research and why I chose to use version 8

NVivo8 allowed me to work in a systematic manner with - transcribed documents, audio files, photographs and to discover emerging themes. This software facilitated my work with different files of imported data and allowed me to question the data which would be inconvenient through manual analysis.

As my project involved the analysis of several types of files, NVivo8 allowed me to process a large variety of qualitative data organised in folders according to type -

interviews, focus groups, field notes and photos. Pdf documents, audio and video files, photographs can be imported and used as sources. Sources could be grouped together and shown in display tabs identifying their contents. External files can import articles or books which cannot be imported and coded like other files. I was also able to represent my participants in files which could be opened to see the kind of data coded for each participant. Each case had attributes like gender, educational status, age, type of SEN, school type. The relationships software tool enabled me to explore any links between two items, e.g. pull out sessions for SEN support and children's poor social skills. Notes specific to data in the form of memos and annotations helped me to reflect on the data, on the progress of the project and formulate new questions about new nodes. NVivo8 matrix tools enabled me to visualise concepts through the pictorial representations of three nodes to identify how they related to each other and see new emerging themes.

In the process of coding data, NVivo8 helped me work inductively using the constant comparison approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The software facilitates the data coding process, both free and tree nodes. Both types of nodes offer flexibility to decide when to group nodes in a tree structure. Some codes in the free nodes were later fitted into existing tree nodes and broader categories were produced by developing other levels of hierarchy in tree nodes.

Although NVivo8 facilitated the process of working with and coding a variety of different sources of data, I controlled the analysis and production of findings, not the software. A debate surrounds employing qualitative data analysis software and its influence on the quality of qualitative research (Weitzman, 2000; Kelle, 1995). Glaser (2003) opposed the use of any software in relation to grounded theory methods as he believed it could destabilise a researcher's resourcefulness. Another criticism of this software is that it can automatically code text and ignore or oversimplify the interpretation of rich data (Richards, 1999). In my opinion, the researcher always has to interpret, identify and study the interrelationships between concepts and categories and do the theorising. This is not something that the software alone could accomplish (Bringer et al., 2004).

Others believe NVivo encourages a disciplined approach to the research process, supports structure, and provides a wide range of programme functions i.e. coding, retrieval, memos, visual representations (Dey, 2007), and a transparent account of the stages of the research process (Bringer et al., 2004). Arguably, the skill and training of the researcher in using NVivo8 for qualitative analysis is paramount rather than the use of the software itself (Bringer et al., 2006). But beyond the use of NVivo8 as specially designed software for qualitative analysis, the question is how the analysis of interaction most usefully develops in methodological terms. New methodological possibilities for studying the multimodal aspects of communication are found in multimodal analysis where different modes of communication, i.e. gesture, gaze, posture, talk, images, are brought together for meaning making. For example, multimodal analysis in the classroom focuses on how different modes facilitate meaning and learning and how they construct disciplinary subjects (Kress et al., 2004). Other examples are discussed in the following section.

4.16 Multimodal analysis

In order to answer the main question of this thesis, how children with SEN are positioned and identified by teachers and peers and how they identify themselves in the discourse of the classroom, I situate my analysis of communication within the theoretical framework of multimodal theory (O' Toole, 1994; Kress et al., 2001, 2004; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, 2001, 2002) and within a socio-cultural perspective around communication and multimodality (Ivarsson et al., 2009). Both theories help me understand how children participate in semiotically mediated activities and how they interact and represent their meanings through different semiotic resources available in the learning context. These methodological tools emerge from social semiotics (Hodge & Kress, 1988), discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2003) and multimodality (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). Multimodality refers to the amalgamation of verbal and non verbal semiotic modes which are understood as semiotically articulated means of communication (Kress, 2000; Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001; Ajayi, 2008).

The theory of multimodality focuses on modes and signs as semiotic resources for interpreting human experiences (Kress and Street, 2006). These modes operate interactively (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). It is an approach to social discourse emphasising how meaning can be constructed through image, music, sound, gesture, gaze and posture as counterparts to verbal language, in contrast to monomodality which uses a single mode or semiotic resource, i.e. language, image, sound (O' Halloran, 2011). Another similar approach is through discourse analysis, which emphasises the need to understand different discourses (van Leeuwen, 2005:95) as 'different ways of making sense of the same aspect of reality, which include and exclude different things and serve different interests.'

Multimodality has also been used in several studies exploring multimodality in relation to technology, literacy and action in the science classroom (Franks & Jewitt, 2001), the visual potential of literacy in early years (Kenner, 2000), preschool classroom interactions (Flewitt, 2005, 2006), teaching and learning in the science classroom (Kress et al, 2001), teaching and learning in English classrooms (Kress et al, 2004) and children's image composition and spatial arrangement (Mavers, 2003). Furthermore, multimodality has been used to investigate teacher-student interactions, children's meaning making and map making (Pahl, 1999, 2001), multisemiotic mathematics texts (O'Halloran, 1999, 2000), internet texts and teaching practices (Nichols & Henley, 2006), visual-verbal synergy in TESOL (Royce, 1998), literacy practices (Stein & Mamabolo, 2005), multiliteracies (Unsworth, 2001), images and texts in reading comprehension tests (Unsworth & Chan, 2008) and literature and computer based teaching (Unsworth et al, 2005). These studies involve the ICT multimedia environment in the production of stories for children with SEN (Faux, 2005), multisensory storytelling for profound intellectual and multiple disabilities (PIMD) (Young et al, 2011; Watson et al, 2002; Fenwick, 2005, 2007), multisensory learning environments and sensory experiences for PIMD (Pagliano, 1999; Hulsegge & Verheul, 1987), the sensory curriculum (Longhorn,

1988), intensive interaction (Hewett & Nind, 1998; Nind, 1996), the impact of interactive whiteboards (IWBs) on teaching, learning of high and low attainment groups and children with SEN and on teacher-student interactivity (Lewin et al, 2008).

4.16.1 The use of images as visual data

In the process of collecting images, including posters with different content - curriculum, social, photographs - and with different format by taking photos, I realised the classroom where the posters are produced and displayed could be explained differently by different people (Becker, 1998). The viewer (student) might not acquire the same message as the creator of the image (teacher) intended as the image has an internal narrative. The external narrative of the image is the context within which it is produced and presented (Banks, 2001). I tried to control my influence on the final presentation of images without cropping or disturbing any of their features. Concerning the transparency of the selection of images, I emphasised only those that provided the richest information about the context in which they were produced. The images are a selection I consider to be significant concerning the different discourses in the classrooms, their realisations through various modes, and which expressed the intentions of the teachers and students. The analysis of these images would help me understand how students with SEN are positioned within the specific classrooms and what kind of meanings the visual images communicated about their social relations with their teachers and peers. Furthermore, my reflection on photographing the images and the impact of the context on the production and presentation of the images is crucial for the validity of visual research (Pink, 2001). Visual data must remain undisturbed but visual data are not (Emmison and Smith, 2000:2-4)

> what the camera can record but...what the eye can see...in this sense photographs should be seen as analogous to code-sheets, the responses to interview schedules, ethnographic fieldnotes, tape recordings of verbal interaction or any one of the numerous ways in which the social researchers seek to capture data for subsequent analysis

It was important for my study to investigate the meaning-making that visual data represent and produce in a specific field (Dicks et al, 2006), for example, how children interact through the multiple modes of communication and how the multiple modes in the classroom encourage or hinder the communication of children with SEN and their peers. *Are there any implicit meanings which multiple modes communicate in the interactions of children?* Through interviews and field observations, I tried to understand the complex processes of communication through which children with SEN construct their positions in the classroom.

4.16.2 Media and modes

My project studies how meanings produce a communicative environment, how information displayed in pictures shapes the ways children communicate in the

classroom and what kind of roles children take in their communication. The various displays in the classrooms I observed communicate different meanings through their written content, shape, colour, position and size. In order to appreciate how these displays produce meaning I took into account the materials - paper, carton, paint - used in the displays and the effects of the displays on the ways children interact; the kind of teaching and learning in each classroom and how that might encourage the communication of children with different ability levels. The modes are the non-material, abstract resources of meaning making like gesture, images, speech, writing, and the media are the material forms like paint, wood, paper, through which modes are transmitted (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001:22) which together compose a multimodal perspective.

My study explored how classroom space is organised through the objects and their colours, shapes and positions and how this produces meaning. For example, I was interested to observe how the organisation of furniture in the classroom places children with SEN in a different position from their peers in terms of teaching. A teacher, for instance, might place all children with SEN on a separate table at distance from those of mainstream peers in order to scaffold his teaching from top-ability to low-ability groups. In this case, different modes could produce different perceptions in children about their peers with SEN in the classroom. In order to conceive what kind of meanings a classroom produces, I focused on the media and modes in each classroom taking into account how teachers and students interacted and interpreted them.

I wanted to use a theoretical framework that could describe the dynamic aspects of communication. Linguistic ethnography represented how meaning making was constructed in children's talk in the classroom and the playground. Drawing on this analytical framework, I used examples from my data to argue that classrooms synthesise official and unofficial social and learning activities with the potential for diverse kinds of inter-student communication, relationships and identities. Bakhtin's concept of evaluation is fundamental to the study of how children communicate their position through talk, as they evaluate their social experiences and become aware of their positioning in the world, developing their self-perception. Evaluation in children's talk could also be seen as culturally determined. Children's social backgrounds are part of their particular evaluations about how to act in the world. Bakhtin sees talk as conveying the intentions of previous speakers and the insinuations of their former contexts of use.

The following section discusses the essence of linguistic ethnography, which was used as a methodological and analytical tool in this study and how it captured the dynamics and mechanisms of the communication of children in my project.

4.17 Linguistic Ethnography

I needed a framework to examine how the positioning and identification of students is constructed in the classroom through various discourses. I found Linguistic

Ethnography, an ethnographic approach to classroom communication and discourse analysis based on Bakhtin's theories of communication, a useful tool.

Why linguistic ethnography? This approach combines the traditions of ethnography and linguistics in the study of classroom talk. Linguistic ethnography affiliates broadly to Hymes' *ethnography of communication* (1972) focusing on the study of language in a particular context (Maybin & Tusting, 2011). However, Rampton et al. (2004) claim that the ethnography of communication does not sufficiently embody linguistic ethnography, as important developments in linguistic anthropology have influenced linguistic ethnographic studies since the 1980s and the method does not reflect the tension that exists between the traditions of linguistics and ethnography in terms of how social reality is approached through social constructionist and realist standpoints. The term *ethnography* in linguistic ethnography refers to Hammersley & Atkinson's (1994) methodological approach, a form of social research for generating data from small-scale groups through unstructured methods. The analytical framework in ethnography is between the participants' perspectives and the researcher's analysis and interpretation of their behaviour and perspectives (Hammersley, 2007). Interactional Sociolinguistics is one possible analytical framework for linguistic ethnography (Rampton, 2007). In interactional sociolinguistics, researchers study issues of language, ethnicity and inequality and draw on the social constructionist view that reality is reconstructed in the social and historical activities of everyday life.

A second tradition that has contributed to linguistic ethnographic practice is in the New Literacy Studies with Street's interest in the role of ethnography for studying the use of literacies that communicate specific ideologies and power within social practice (Rampton et al., 2004). Linguistic ethnography has been used in educational settings to study language in classrooms and the beliefs and social categories of language and interaction (Heller, 1999; Rampton, 1995), language and learning in classrooms with culturally diverse backgrounds and students' experience of language in schools (Pahl, 2007; Creese et al., 2008) and finally, studies on student voicing concerning people and events and popular culture and their effects on student interaction (Maybin, 2006; Lytra, 2007). Mercer (2010:1) explains that studies in LE are 'observational, non-interventional, and qualitative' and entail thorough and in depth investigation of classroom talk as it develops in its social and cultural environment. He suggests that linguistic ethnographers place high value on the interdependence of language and social context, as they develop reciprocally. Researchers believe that teaching and learning are developed through cultural and local norms and that classroom education can be understood by studying the nature and functions of talk. Assumptions within this tradition are that talk is referential, interpersonal, emotive and evaluative; that talk and interaction mediate the process of socialisation and that children use talk in order to negotiate and discover their identities; moreover, generalisations that quantitative studies try to establish are inappropriate for LE as it is believed that each social situation is unique.

What is the essence of this approach? Linguistic ethnography holds that language and social reality are interdependent and that the study of situated language can

indicate how social and cultural events are produced in everyday activity (Rampton et al., 2004). Much work in linguistic ethnography focuses on the interrelationship at the micro level of interaction at the meso and macro levels of social structure (Rampton et al., 2006). In my research, linguistic ethnography relates to the micro level of classroom interaction within the macro level of contextual structure (Rampton et al., 2006). Ethnography provides a description of context, and linguistics provides 'an authoritative analysis of language use not typically available through participant observation and the taking of field notes' (Rampton et al., 2004:6). Linguistic ethnography clarifies the context fundamental to the analysis of children's communication and studies the classroom as a cultural context with its own sites of struggle and local institutional imperatives and affordances for particular kinds of learning and interaction (Creese, 2005:193),

> What counts as knowledge in content-based classrooms is determined not only by the intentions of teachers and students but by wider societal debates and attitudes to...education and inclusion.

Furthermore, the linguistic ethnographic analysis of interactional and institutional discourse can reveal a great deal about the reproduction of social identities in language, exposing their 'emergence, embedding and effectivity' (Rampton et al., 2004: 6).

How LE fits the needs of my project? My project explores how 10-12 year old students with SEN and their peers communicate through various modes of verbal and nonverbal behaviour. To develop a fuller insight into the processes of communication required an approach which views the flow of interaction as a process developed within a particular historical, cultural and institutional context (Mercer, 2010). I employed LE to identify and portray the kind of meanings children renegotiate through their talk and interactions with each other, inside and outside of the classroom. I see children's talk as a way of developing knowledge about their social world and as a way of satisfying their needs, expressing their inner feelings, and constructing relationships with others.

The use of ethnographic methods in my research captured interactions and the observed events in a rich and detailed manner. Part of my research was based on field notes, tape-recorded talk, transcribed recordings and extracts as illustrative examples from the transcriptions. My observations in classrooms in each school were 'typical for studies which use ethnographic methods to study life in just a few classrooms' (Mercer, 2010:6). For instance, Maybin (2006) studied the talk of 10-12 year old children in and out of the classroom using radio microphones. The study showed how children develop their ideas and evaluations through their interactions with peers and how children appropriate the talk of significant others, i.e. adults, parents, for meaning making. The rich and in depth analysis of classroom interaction can be studied through multimodal analysis, where talk is one of multiple modes of communication along with gesture, gaze, posture, photographs and spatial arrangements (Jewitt et al., 2004). There is some tension here in

linguistic ethnography since the definition of *linguistic* could be challenged by the multimodal representation of interaction in communication.

According to Maybin and Tusting (2007:521) the methodological tools of ethnography are complemented by linguistics in order to develop a better understanding of the way in which language mediates social life and culture. However, language and social interactions refer to two different levels of reality, i.e., 'local interactions and social processes', which create tensions in the ontological and epistemological assumptions that determine how the interrelationships between language and social processes are interpreted. Combining social and linguistic theoretical frameworks is complicated as concepts like *inequalities*, *class structures* and *identity construction* are difficult to identify through language alone. The ways people use language in their interactions and the meanings conveyed can only be seen as concepts constructed by people and which, in reality, might not exist. Therefore, the process of making meaning about reality depends on the ontological and epistemological position of the researcher about 'what reality is' and 'how reality can be known' (May, 2002:226).

My study investigated how classroom discourse influences the interactions of children with SEN and their peers in their communication, but *what constitutes classroom discourse?* I could claim it is constituted by social processes which affect the local interaction of children in a classroom and the ways they interact. These social processes can be expressed in explicit and implicit ways. The local interaction of children may be directly observed when classroom discourse is expressed explicitly but not when classroom discourse works in implicit ways. It is easier to understand how children with SEN are physically positioned in different ability groups as part of the classroom discourse than how this affects their construction of identity.

The ontological and epistemological positioning of this research asks if these different levels of reality exist as independent entities or depend on my interpretation and positioning of them. In linguistic ethnography the tension exists between the different positioning of social constructionism and realism. In interactional sociolinguistics, researchers are often inclined to believe that reality and social structures are constructed in interaction and in the specific historical and social activities of everyday life (Rampton, 2007). A realist approach in applied linguistics holds that social reality and social processes are not produced in interaction but exist as independent entities which can only be studied indirectly. In linguistic ethnography the relationship between social reality and language can only be understood in implicit ways. It is necessary to draw on linguistics to understand ideas such as culture and on ethnography in order to understand language in a real social and cultural context (Maybin & Tusting, 2007). Therefore, linguistic ethnography offers a more inclusive explanation about reality which neither of the two traditions alone could provide (Hammersley, 2007). So, *how can the reality under study be represented while the participants and I hold different perspectives about the ways in which we understand social practices?* Maybin and Tusting (2007) describe as unavoidable the impact of the researcher on the social practices under

investigation as the presence and involvement of the researcher is obvious. In this case, the employment of different research strategies, i.e. observations, interviews, and my reflexion on the analytical process and impact on practices is essential in order to develop a transparent account of the reality under study.

In the next section, I will present the ethical issues that were encountered in my study and the ethical documents (See Appendix G) which were distributed to all the participants.

4.18 Moral and ethical issues in the research

The term 'ethics' derives from the Greek word 'ethos' which is the character, values attached to a specific person or culture. This term was used as early as the Hippocratic School (Smith, 1996). 2002). Research with children entails specific ethical guidelines (Greig & Tayler, 1999; Christensen & James, 2000; Farrell, 2005).

In the process of the selection and organisation of research ethics, the researcher starts from where an ethical system should be designed and applied from the beginning of the research. In research there must be rich reference to ethics. The researcher uses ethics as a starting point for conducting ethical research with reference to ethical access to the participants and the protection of the data collected. The scientist has no right to violate privacy or alter the true identity and purpose of the survey. The researcher must inform the participants accurately about her role and the study's objectives. For this reason, I have distributed to the students' parents and to the teachers an Information Sheet about the objectives of the study and their rights. Without participant consent, it is not reasonable for investigational research to take place (Cohen et al., 2007:57-58). In the process of fieldwork, questions that the researcher should consider are:

> Whose knowledge is this? Why (as a researcher) do I choose to construct this problem? What assumptions are hidden within my research practices? How could this work produce exclusions? What do I do as I encounter those unexpected exclusions...? What is my privilege (or power position) in this research? (Canella & Lincoln, 2007:316)

The ethical issues encountered in educational research can be complex and sensitive and place researchers in a morally difficult position. Every stage in the process of research can be a potential source of ethical problems. Particular emphasis is placed on the informed consent of research participants by ethically driven research. Participants must be aware their participation is voluntary and provided with a detailed explanation of the benefits, rights, potential harm and risks associated with their participation in research. The phrasing of the statements in the consent form and the information sheet about the objectives of my study, and the brief statement of my study's research aims and proposed methods was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Department of Education, University of Nottingham, prior to distribution to prospective participants. Moreover, there are a number of ethical issues involved in the participation of children with disabilities.

The specific issues that need to be addressed when working with children are informed consent/assent, confidentiality/anonymity, capacity to withdraw (Cuskelly, 2005; Lewis, 2001; 2002), recognition, ownership and social responsibility (Lewis, 2002). In this study, the names of the students and teachers were replaced by pseudonyms and coding information for the schools and the participants were employed so that they cannot be identified.

Some researchers make a distinction between consent and assent (Tinson, 2009; Bray, 2007). Thus, consent refers to parents and teachers who act as the gatekeepers, refusing or allowing children to participate in research. Assent refers to children's compliance, capacity, information, comprehension and willingness to be involved in research after consent has been ensured (Connors & Stalker, 2003; Lewis, 2002). However, what matters is that children should be fully aware of the interests of the study which they have assented to participate on. Some studies argue that children under the age of 9 might not understand what the study is asking of them (Ondrusek et al., 1998; Homan, 2001), while others believe that 7-12 year old children are competent to understand the objectives of a study (Abramovitch et al., 1991; Helseth & Slettebo, 2004). In my study, listening to children's voices was very important and I considered the children to be reliable participants and discussants (Danby & Farrell,2004) in ways that both value their ability to converse and identify possible issues of power asymmetries in research practice, i.e. displacing power for gaining children's consent (David et al., 2001). Therefore, for children to give their consent, they need to be capable participants in terms of discussing their experiences and willing to participate in the research (Danby & Farrell, 2004).

A person's ability to give consent, especially those with learning disabilities, depends partly on the ways in which the objectives and requirements of a research study are articulated (Melton & Stanley, 1996). For the purposes of my study, I ensured that the statements used for obtaining consent corresponded to the level of understanding that could be accessed in the case of children with mild intellectual disability, e.g., students with global developmental delay. BERA (2004) requires that,

> in the case of the participants whose age, intellectual capability, or other vulnerable circumstance may limit the extent to which they can be expected to understand or agree voluntarily to undertake their role ... researchers must also seek the collaboration and approval of those who act in guardianship (e.g. parents) or as 'responsible others' (Paragraph 7)

The issue of consent was discussed with teachers, parents and children and consent was obtained both from the children and from their parents. Teachers were also asked to give their consent to participate in semi-structured interviews and to give me access to observe their classrooms after they had been informed about the

project what their role would be and their right to withdraw at any stage of the research process (Alderson, 1995).

4.18.1 Right to withdraw

Allowing the participants to withdraw at any stage of the research process is important as they have the right to privacy (Homan, 2001; Alderson, 2004). However, a child might find it difficult to express the need to withdraw. If children display uncooperativeness or frustration, this could be seen as *informed dissent*, whereby children want to withdraw from the study (Homan, 2001). There are cases where children with multiple learning difficulties and intellectual disabilities display difficult behaviour, which from the researcher's perspective might reflect their right to dissent (Baker et al., 2002). Some researchers suggest that constant communication with people surrounding these children, i.e. parents, teachers, could be helpful in validating whether a child's behaviour indicates withdrawal or interest in participation (Kellett & Nind, 2001). The main point is that the children in my study were informed by the teachers and me about their right to withdraw which can exercise at any time and that their participation is voluntary (de Meyrick, 2005).

4.18.2 Confidentiality/ Anonymity

Confidentiality and anonymity are essential research ethics. It can be difficult to maintain confidentiality as a child might disclose information important for safety reasons but which could place at risk the relationship of the researcher and the child (Oakley, 2000). Confidentiality needs to be considered when conducting interviews. For this reason, the right of the participants to confidentiality/anonymity were ensured through the parent/guardian consent form and the teacher consent form. Moreover, before the interviews with the students, they were orally assured that their information will be kept confidential and anonymous. According to BERA (2004:9) all information revealed in the process of interviewing should be kept private and confidential and participants need to be assured that the researcher is the only person with access to the data. When participants are involved in interviews where information is exchanged in an open way, then confidentiality is not an issue (Clegg, 2001). In my study, children with learning disabilities were taken out of the classroom to be interviewed in focus groups. The labelling of children with SEN as different could be seen as problematic. However, in this study different focus groups were involved and several non SEN children were also taken out of classes. Concerning anonymity, I gave the participants pseudonyms -for example, Danny, is the pseudonym of the teacher of year 4/5 at Sunny Hill- and written documentation did not reveal personal information pertaining to the educational institutions or the participants (Lindsay & Dockrell, 2000; BERA, 2004:8).

The study's limitations are discussed in the next section.

4.19 Study's limitations

This research study relied on three case studies of schools; the results are not intended to lead to generalisations but to contribute to a better understanding and interpretation of these particular cases and perhaps provide a general framework for the study of similar issues in other school environments. The choice of semi-structured, in-depth interviews highlighted the issues to be studied in depth, which at the beginning were not the main objective of this study but contributed to a better and more comprehensive mapping of the educational reality in the observed schools.

Two teachers from two schools were very hesitant to agree to interviews and classroom observation, and time was needed to establish trust and a good rapport between myself and participants. One teacher had reservations about the use of the tape recorder, and for this reason, the answers were recorded in interview notes. It needs to be mentioned how the interviews and observations complemented each other. For example, non verbal communication and the interaction of children and teachers were best studied by observation, while the verbal expression of the teachers and children about how they see children with SEN and their communication with them was best expressed through interviews.

Through the multi-methodological approach, I tried to understand the topic multiperspectivally. Multimodal analysis was employed in pursuit of a detailed examination and analysis of each school context. Through this investigation, valuable data emerged for the study of the pedagogic practices promoted in particular school environments and the ways in which these supported the positioning of students with SEN by teachers and peers, and which determined their degree of inclusion. For this reason, the study's primary purpose was the understanding and interpretation of these cases. I attempted to ensure impartiality in my research role and the reliability and validity of research through the application of different methods and the piloting of research instruments. In the present qualitative study, objectivity was not a priority since this is not considered a feasible goal of qualitative social research studies (Keegan, 2009:17) as, 'The researcher is arguably the most important research tool in qualitative research and his or her past experience, training and personality will inevitably colour the outcomes.'

4.20 Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the research process of selecting the participating schools, and the process of grounded theory that guided the collection, coding and analysis of data. Synthesising different qualitative methods allow the data to be triangulated and increase the validity of research and the trustworthiness of the data for analysis providing a holistic approach to the inclusion of the students with SEN in the specific classrooms. Moreover, the multimodal analytic lens through which inclusion is studied minimises my preconceptions and counterbalances the weaknesses of one method with the strengths of another. Furthermore, I reflected

on the strengths and weaknesses of my role as a researcher, and the challenges that I encountered during my fieldwork. There was also reference to the ethical issues of this study emerged prior, during and after my communication with the participants.

In the next chapter, I present and analyse the data of the study.

CHAPTER 5
DATA ANALYSIS-PART 1

5. Introduction

The aim of my research was to explore to what degree children with special educational needs are well served by schools using weak classification and framing as opposed to schools with strong classification and framing. I wanted to find out which aspects of each school setting are more advantageous for students with SEN. To answer this question, I now draw on my data analysis, which shows that students with SEN are generally served well but occasionally let down by schools with strong classification and framing. However, children with SEN do both better and are served well by schools with weak classification and framing.

I described the kind of signs observable in the classroom through a multimodal perspective in Chapter 4, Methodology. This section focuses on the construction of pedagogy through the spatial organisation of each classroom and the visual displays which shape the pedagogical relationships between teacher and children. These signs can be factors that reflect the pedagogy in each of the four classrooms investigated in the three primary schools. The objective is to explore what kind of government and school policies shape pedagogical practices and what kind of effects these have on the social inclusion of children with SEN.

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 review briefly the earlier discussion of pedagogy and the multimodal approach to analysis (Section 4.16). Sections 5.3, 5.4, 5.5 analyse the observations in Sunny Hill School, Panoptical Heights and Nova Spectrum, respectively.

5.1 Pedagogy and the classroom

'Curriculum defines what counts as valid knowledge, pedagogy defines what counts as valid transmission of knowledge and evaluation defines what counts as a valid realization of the knowledge on the part of the taught' (Bernstein, 1973:85)

Bernstein (1990) describes schools as structured agencies of cultural transmission whose pedagogic structures are generated according to their organising principles. Bernstein is referring to the *instructional* and *regulative* discourses and both these aspects of pedagogic discourse are described in terms of strong/weak classification and framing concepts. The assumption is that the processes of constructing shared understanding and communication between teacher and students may vary as a function of the different structure and organisation of schools. Structural and interactional descriptions of classrooms – as an analysis of *micro- interactional level* (Daniels, 2006) - might provide a description and exploration of how a teaching environment is constructed through what is and how it is enacted in the classroom. In this sense, semiotic signs, like classroom layout and visual displays, play a vital role in realising the rules that regulate the curriculum and behaviour, the criteria

that legitimise teaching and learning, and which develop specific patterns of social relations between teacher and children. The role of signs in the multimodal approach is central as they mediate different forms of linguistic and non-linguistic communication in the classroom. It becomes possible to see through the distribution of control and principles of control in schools over the way knowledge is constructed, competencies are communicated, and behaviour is managed. In light of this I focus on the basics of social semiotics.

5.2 The Multimodal approach in the classroom

Visual phenomena can be explored by considering multiple semiotic resources and meaning-making practices that participants use in order to construct their social worlds. The main focus here was observing the visual phenomena that produce meaningful action (Goodwin, 2001), that is, the range of modes - gaze, gesture, movement, body posture, spatial location, image, speech- contribute to meaning making (Jewitt, 2006; Kress, 2000; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). The analysis of different modes contributes to the analysis of social inclusion. When considering the inclusion of children with SEN, this study shows that it is not sufficient to focus only on talk either between children and teacher or between children with SEN and peers and that the multiple modes as they appear in each classroom and children's multimodal contact within them need to be explored.

In the classroom the teacher employs a range of modes, such as, gesture, gaze, images, to organise her work, so it was important to investigate how modes interacted in the classroom and the kind of messages teachers distributed to children. If this study had focused only on the mode of speech then it would have failed to understand the activities in which children participate and the meanings that develop.

To explore how inclusion could be realised in a classroom for children with SEN, I first noted the spatial organisation of the furniture in the classrooms and on visual displays to find out the kind of values conveyed to children in an inclusive educational context. ***'In what ways are students with SEN identified and positioned in mainstream education settings by their teachers and peers?'***

Second, I investigated the communicational patterns embedded in inclusive classroom discourses and how they were realised and third, any possible objectives behind pedagogical activities. As part of the multimodal approach, I exploited all the information gathered from the detailed field notes of my observations of children in the classroom and the playground, the focus groups with children and the interviews with teachers and teaching assistants. As Jewitt (2006) explained, sign making is an active process through which sign makers choose the right signifier for the meaning they wish to communicate. This results in an interaction between the interests of the sign maker - which differ across contexts and time - the values and rules of the school and classroom, the curriculum and the roles of teachers and children. Thus, sign making is essential for looking at inclusion through a

multimodal lens and exploring communication between children as they select and adapt from their environment the signifier that fits best their meanings.

The analysis of sign making is very challenging for a researcher since the purpose is to unfold the interests of the participants. For this reason and regarding objectivity, multiple interpretations have been employed in the exploration of sign making and the meanings that emerged.

In section 5.3, I analyse the data from the Sunny Hill primary School, the first school visited. *The data from the fieldnotes, in-class tape-recorded conversations, interviews, and focus groups are presented with the dates during which they were collected.

5.3 Sunny Hill School classrooms

5.3.1 The teachers' perspective

In Sunny Hill, I observed Danny's year 4/5 classroom and Bam's year 6 classroom. Their names are pseudonyms. The classrooms seem to be organised in a different way. As the Head commented, this school sets high academic standards in order for pupils to achieve good results in the National Tests. This can be seen from the Teacher Assessments which estimate the percentage of pupils performing well at Level 4 and above or Level 5 in English, Mathematics and Science. Specifically, 65% of pupils were estimated to reach Level 4 or above in English, with 24% achieving Level 5. In Mathematics, 88% of students were estimated to reach Level 4 or above and 35%, Level 5. Finally, in Science 94% of pupils were expected to attain Level 4 or above, and 47% Level 5. At class level, emphasis on academic performance seemed to be part of the teachers' material representation of the classroom layout, visual displays and organisation of curricular tasks. Danny pointed out that,

> Danny: In this school we've been encouraged to kind of always plan. So taking, looking at the National Curriculum plan for your top learners or your high ability and then from there work down. So, start at the top and ...scaffold down. (5/4/10)*

He also explained that the withdrawal for children with special educational needs in specific subjects is a practice which *'takes away...the social side'*.

> Danny: we do take people with special needs out for literacy and numeracy to get that extra support and it takes away from kind of the social side...they are not involved in a large class environment. (5/4/10)

The targets place higher value on the academic and less on the emotional side of pedagogy, highlighting the inability of the system to promote a balanced pedagogy, of which Danny was aware.

Lil, the teaching assistant in year 4, 5 explained that withdrawal contexts facilitated her work to support each individual child's needs through Individual Educational Plans (IEP) which schools provided for children with SEN.

> Lil: It's mixed. There's year 3, 4, 5, 6 but they are all working on their individual targets within that group for their IEP work...(8/4/10)

However, different tasks seemed to develop lower levels of expectation from Bam, the teacher of year 6, about the progress of her students with SEN.

> Bam: Obviously, they just couldn't access the curriculum at the level that the year 6's are working at really...they all access the whole curriculum at a level that they can... (2/4/10)

Bam gave her view that *obviously* children with SEN could not access the same curriculum as the rest of the children, underlining the categorisation of children in ability groups and the development of specific identities. Special resources, i.e. books, pictures, special equipment, could encourage the development of cognitive and behavioural skills and the mastery of practical tasks for children with SEN. However, it could be argued that making this distinction could reinforce their separate identification in the classroom and their positioning in low-ability groups as reflected by Bam.

She discussed the various types of special resources available for children with SEN.

> Bam: So there'll be pictures...different books or we might have equipment that they can use, so if we are counting, we actually give them money to count with. And we'll give them a board to use or we'll give them cubes to count with. (2/4/10)

It seems that this school devised pedagogic strategies that comply with government-based criteria which differentially position children with SEN by promoting different access to the curriculum, streaming and grouping arrangements. In the organisation of the classrooms, these practices explicitly articulated the strong boundaries in teacher-student pedagogic relationships where teachers established the criteria for the positioning of children according to ability and the production and distribution of knowledge and resources. It could be argued that environments with strong tendencies towards categorisation and the promotion of academic progress can encourage placing children in competitive and individualistic activities.

Any differences in these two classrooms were due to the particular teachers' practices and their degree of autonomy in actualising a pedagogy that mediated the school's interest in academic success. In order to clarify this point, I present an individual analysis of each classroom.

5.3.2 Danny's classroom: *'it's just about them having a bit of fun'*

5.3.2.1 The classroom layout

Some of the signs in classrooms, the layout, visual displays and teacher's body posture mediate different pedagogic discourses and construct different pedagogic relations between teacher and children. The layout of year 4/5 classroom, presented in Fig. 5.1, was organised in four pairs of desks with five children sitting at each desk. This layout seemed to encourage children to collaborate and exchange ideas, suggesting a *participatory/democratic discourse*. Based on my observations of lessons, children were encouraged to talk with peers at the same table while they worked on a project. However, it was not common practice to encourage interactions between different tables. In Literacy and Numeracy, children worked individually at each table or participated in competitive activities to collect team points. Danny's desk was at the front of the room, next to the smart board. He used his desk for his laptop and files while his stool faced the wall. The teacher did not seem to use the position of his desk to survey the children but as somewhere to put his own work.

Figure 5.1 **Sunny Hill School: Danny's classroom layout (year 4/5)**

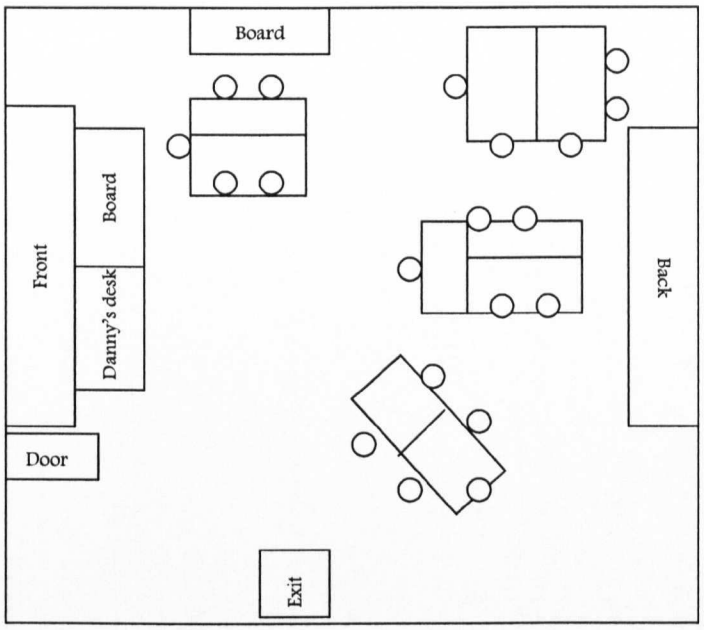


Figure 5.2 **Sunny Hill School: diagram of Danny's classroom (year 4/5)**

The position of the teacher's desk at the front of the classroom and opposite the children's tables could suggest his authority position. This kind of arrangement, as shown in Fig. 5.2, left an open space between his desk and the children's tables which facilitated his movement round the classroom. He was able to walk around the tables and interact with pupils and have eye contact with those pupils sitting and facing the back of the classroom as well. The visual displays around the walls of the classroom presented curricular themes, posters by children and maps. The teacher's main focus on the subjects of the National Curriculum was mediated through posters of grammar rules, numeracy, verbs, adjectives and adverbs displayed on the periphery of the classroom (Fig. 5.3). They were all word-processed, laminated and framed with yellow or red paper.

5.3.2.2The visual layout of the displays

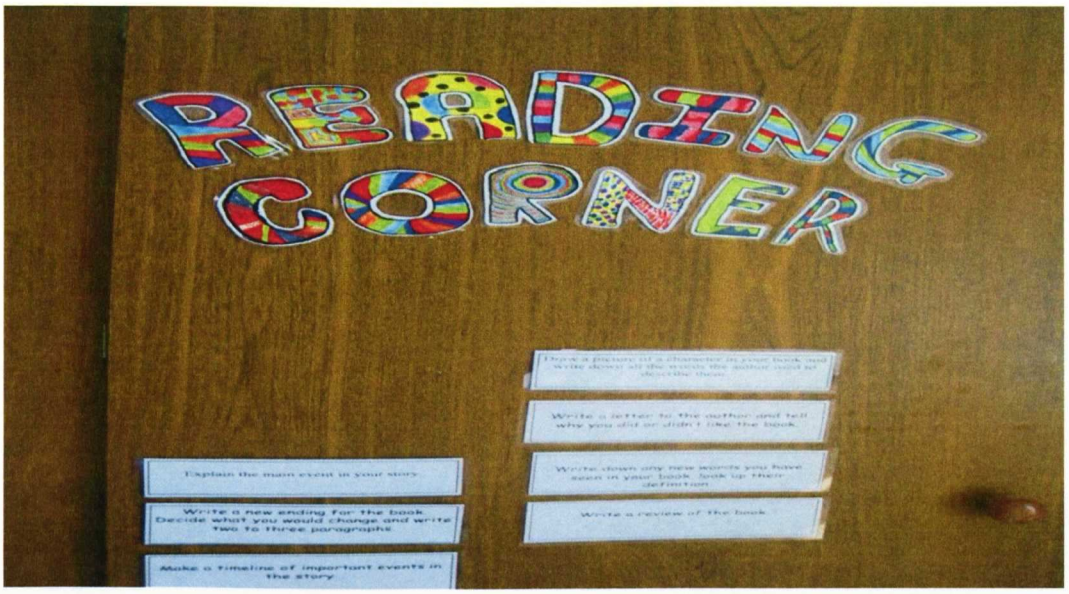
In terms of the organisation and presentation of visual displays, the teacher chose the bright colours of the background and frames to make them attractive to children. The content of some posters emphasised aspects of curricular subjects in Literacy and Numeracy and were mainly on the front or side walls next to the board and on the ceiling making the instructional discourse more explicit and distinguishable from the regulative discourse. The Children's artwork was positioned at the back, with some displayed on the side walls, thus creating two spaces. Some of the children's artwork showed individual features whereas some had homogeneous patterns in the production of the main design and colours. Individual features suggest a degree of autonomy in deciding the criteria for producing their work and for possession of part of the classroom space.

Furthermore, this suggested that Danny was not dominant in the formulation of learning as there was a balance between children's posters and his.

There were several posters of children's art work, like one inspired by Picasso next to the white board (Fig.5.4). The Children's art works had their own individual features, signalling their autonomy of production, although there were similarities in the design and colours. On other walls were posters dealing with team work and class points (Fig. 5.5). These posters represented the seating arrangements of children by ability in Literacy and Numeracy lessons. Danny put the children into teams competing with each other and collecting points. The five groups of students had different group names for numeracy and literacy, which places students in a competitive position in terms of their intellectual abilities. The names of the students and groups were highlighted by different colours and in a hierarchical order, making it obvious to students where they were placed. This display could be how children become aware of the values that prevail in modern society where competition determines their position in the hierarchy, and in this context, the teacher has the role of facilitator. The display clearly reflected the curriculum content, thus expressing commitment to the teacher's assessment strategies and the school's to achievement in the core curriculum subjects. On the other hand, both displays encouraged the participation and inclusion of all students, sharing a common target of succeeding and prevailing.

The second display demonstrated clearly how points were distributed and could be interpreted as a reward scheme for the children's hard work. The use of the word *awarded* conveyed to students a message of external reinforcement at the individual and group level. It also highlighted the common target of the teams, the collection of points. The third display (see Fig. 5.5) indicated the involvement in point chasing, where the potential highest individual score was '*22,500 points*' and the potential highest group total was '*472,500*'. Although intellectual activities in Literacy and Numeracy might be left out of point chasing, it could be argued that overall, these posters represented mixed-ability tasks inclusive of all the children.

Another poster (Fig. 5.6) encouraging the inclusive participation of children in tasks was displayed in a prominent position in the classroom and had been created by the teacher to communicate the rotation of hierarchical roles in the management system of the class. Students had specific tasks for managing class responsibilities following a specific hierarchy of agent, coordinator, executive, director, and head. The poster indicated the role of the agents first and the head last. This might have been because the content of the display was addressed at the children and the purpose of the poster might not have been to emphasise different roles but to show the inclusive rotation of particular roles and the participation of all the children in them. The poster in terms of content used big, bright colours. The language used in the titles of the roles might seem complicated for the children but they were able to become aware of the meaning behind the words when taking on the specific roles. Next to each role was a photo of a child riding a horse, illustrating the person *leading* in the role. The smiley faces of children on the photos made the content of the poster attractive and developed a friendly atmosphere.



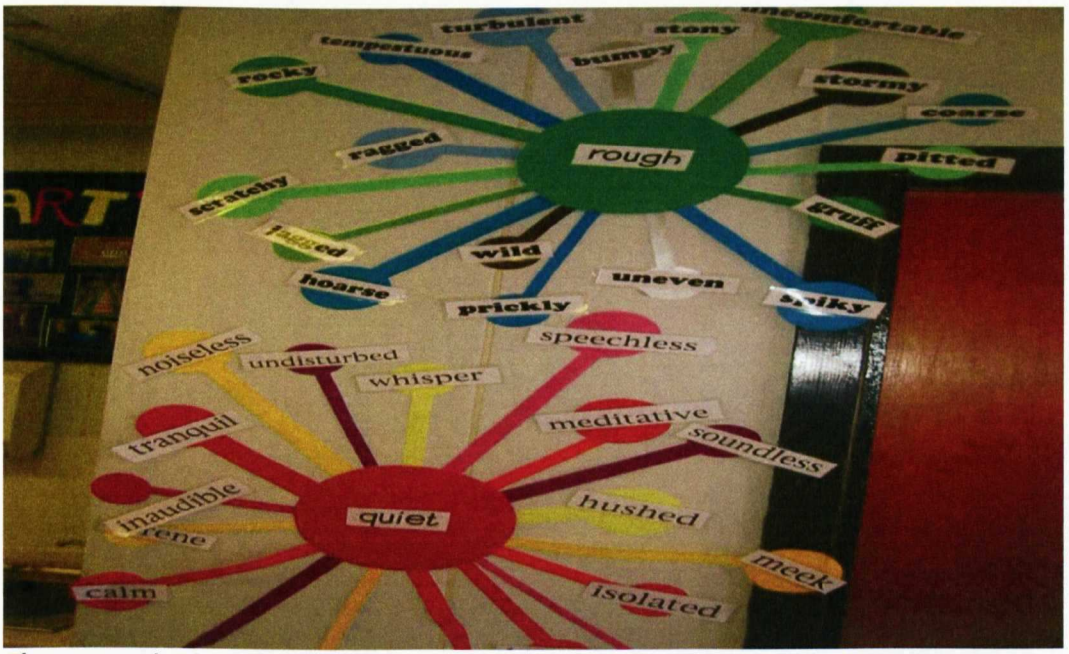
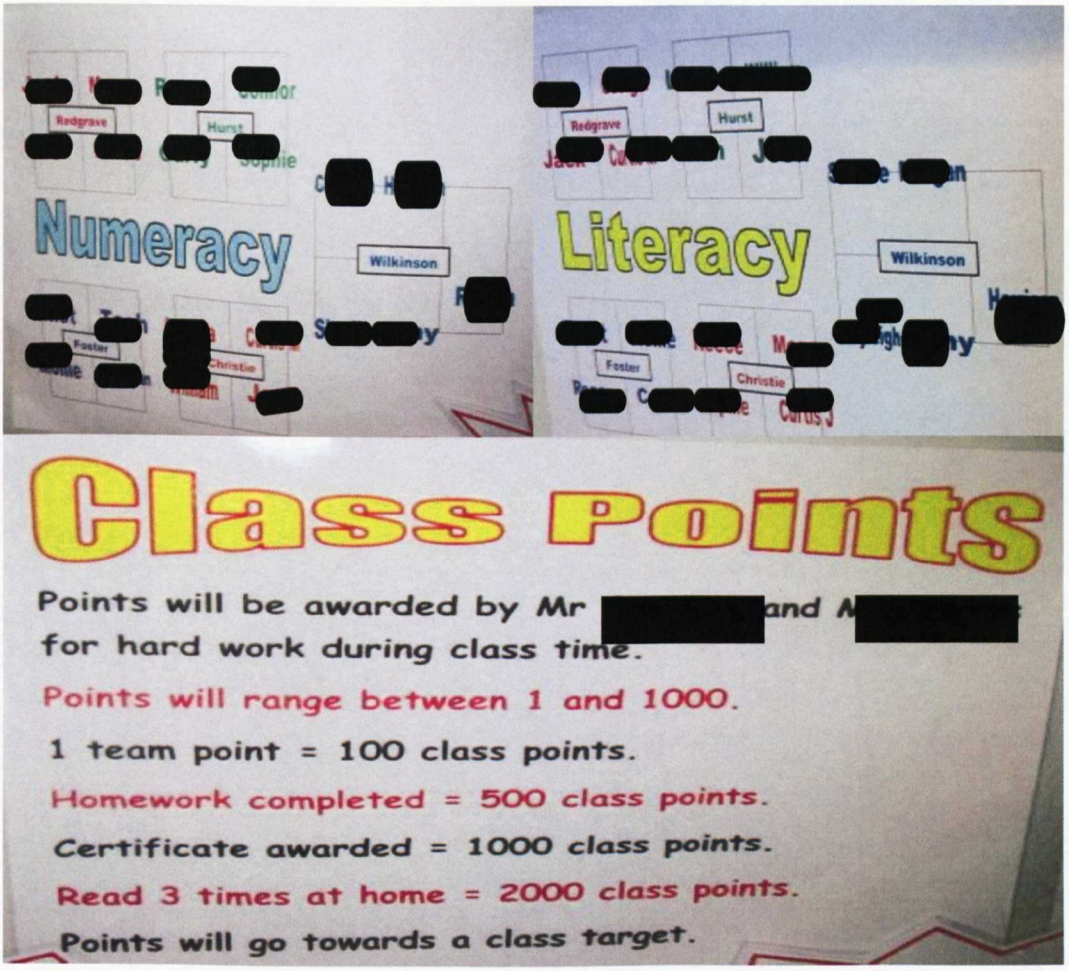


Figure 5.3 **a, b Displays of the curriculum in Danny's classroom (year 4/5)**

Figure 5.4 Children's artwork about Picasso in Danny's classroom (year 4/5)



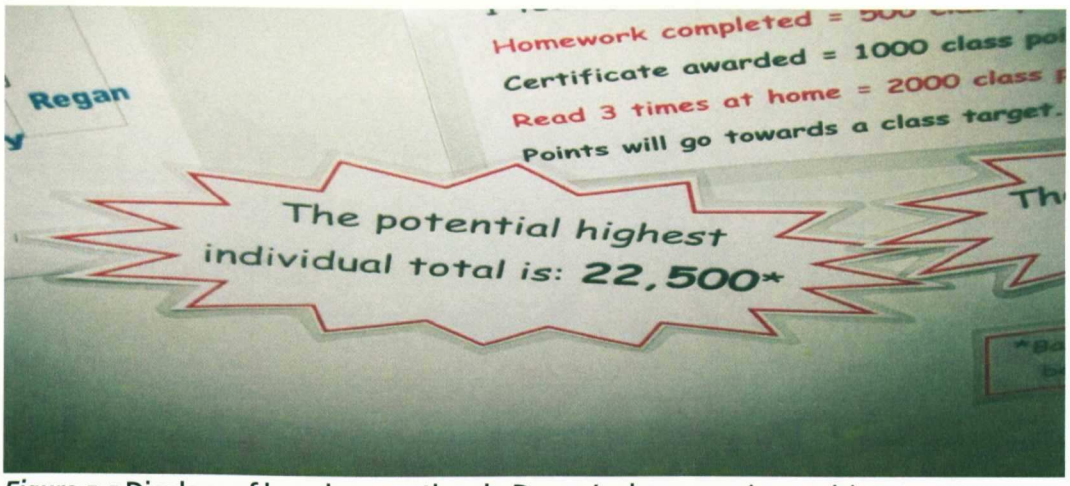


Figure 5.5 Displays of learning practices in Danny's classroom (year 4/5)

Figure 5.6 Display of the management roles of children in Danny's classroom (year 4/5)

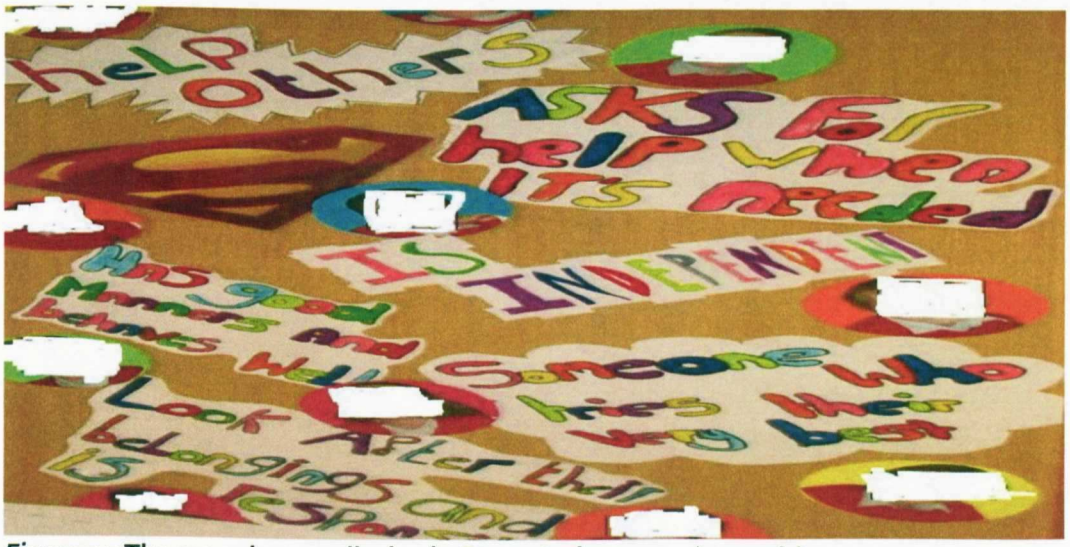


Figure 5.7 The *super learner* display in Danny's classroom (year 4/5)

Children's responsibilities were also addressed in another poster (Fig. 5.7) on one of the teacher's cupboards, in a less prominent position, close to the exit door in the classroom. It presented the skills of the *super learner*, an ability valued in this school. The super learner band, as an extension of the school's reward scheme, is awarded to children who are good students, act responsibly and achieve good academic performance. Moreover, it values support for and respect of others, good behaviour and individual learning. It is a display produced by the children and addressed the children. The photographs of children's faces beside each message communicated the content in a friendly way, making its message attractive to a child audience. All the attributes of a super learner are positive and expressed in informal language. The messages contributed to the socialisation of students and endorsed inclusivity and equality among the children. Among the photographs and close to the *S* sign in Figure 5.7 is the photo of a student with SEN, highlighting the inclusivity of the practice. However, the photo links to two messages; one conveys the message *being independent*, which is questionable as he is dependent on teaching assistant support; the other is *asking for help when it is needed*, again referring to the need for support. Both messages contradict the idea of *independent learner*.

5.3.2.3 Danny's classroom as a sign of pedagogy

Danny's year 4/5 classroom was an open space with tables arranged asymmetrically, which suggested contrasting features of pedagogy. Danny organised the children's seating in groups which facilitated collaboration. He encouraged group work that entailed dialogue, inventiveness, choices, the exchange of ideas and creation of meaning, where the interaction itself was the main purpose. Children were encouraged to be active in the classroom. However, participation in tasks was allowed only between children at the same table and not between tables, which constrained the flow of communication between the children. Furthermore, Danny determined the pace, when work was to be finished. He was always clear about the amount of time children had to prepare a presentation or solve a problem, either in groups or individually.

At a structural level, the patterns of communicative interaction seemed to be dialogic and interactive rather than monologic and hierarchical. However, Danny decided how they were going to carry out activities and set the rules in a monological communicative mode. It seemed in this case that his monologue stimulated the interest of the students to interact with him and to actively participate in the activity. This implies that even what seemed to be a monologue could have dialogic elements which stimulated communication. Danny's movements round the classroom implied a dialogue with the students as he went between the tables, keeping eye contact with children and interacting and helping them with their tasks. Thus, he expressed his authority less and positioned himself in a symmetrical and less hierarchical pedagogical relationship with the children.

The analysis of the next dialogue from year 4/5 shows how students took different positions through their speech as the teacher encouraged their exchange of ideas about their school. It seemed to be an inclusive activity encouraging the collective

positioning and participation of all the children. The theme invoked the children's social interest and sensitivity about school issues. The children were allowed to develop their ideas and elaborate on them through their presentations. It was a constructive activity facilitating dialogue and the exchange of ideas among the children.

The next section examines the verbal interaction of Danny with his students in the classroom.

5.3.2.4 Verbal communication

The verbal communication of Danny with his students during a mixed ability task in the classroom is presented in Excerpt 5.1.

***Excerpt* 5.1 Mixed ability in task (year 4, 5) Danny's classroom (19/2/10)**

Danny:	*You have to work together to prepare a speech for all the students to listen to. You are also preparing an advertisement explaining what your party will do for school before the Election Day. Tidy your tables, and organize your things to get ready for your presentations.*	1. 5.
Milo:	*Mr. Danny how much time do we have? Mr. Danny? How much time do we have?*	
Danny:	*Listen everybody! You've got twenty minutes to finish with your work!*	
Darwin:	*Mr. Danny should we change tables?*	10.
Danny:	*No, everyone will work with his team and then each team... Listen everybody! And then each team will present its presentation. After we finish we will vote which the best team is to get elected.*	
Children	*[chatting]*	15.
Danny:	*Listen! There are some rules that you need to follow during your presentations!*	
Children:	*Shhhh!*	
Danny:	*You should not ask questions until the students finish with their presentations. Then ask anything you like.*	20.
Ruby:	*Mr. Danny? Mr. Danny? Can I ask something?*	
Danny:	*Yes Ruby*	
Ruby:	*When are we voting?*	
Danny:	*After we finish with all the presentations. You should sit at different tables and you'll need to decide what things you like about the different parties and why.*	25
Children [at the back table]:	*We're gonna win! Who's making the presentation?*	
Danny:	*Listen! All the children from each team will say something, a sentence or two.*	
Lucy:	*Let's start! Let's start!*	30

Danny involved the children in a team-orientated activity with a competitive underlying principle. He emphatically used *you* to engage the children in their responsibilities. The use of *we* established an inclusive approach as it implies sharing between teacher and students. The repeated question of the child about timing shows the children were accustomed to following a specific time framework regulating their activities. This suggests an approach that facilitates the teacher's lesson plan or could be part of a strongly framed environment with explicit rules to organise the children's behaviour and activities. Danny tried to engage the children in the activity while using imperatives in his speech. Darwin's question suggests openness to a more interactive task involving children from different desks. Danny's negative response shows that he set the rules about the task and controlled the overall steps of the activity incorporated in the process of *work-present-vote.* His reference to voting states the purpose of the activity. Competitiveness could operate as motivation for children.

Danny used *should* (19, and *have to, 1) Darwin, (10)* also uses *should* to ask about the rules for their presentations and voting. Ruby's question (21) about voting suggests her interest in the outcome of the task, related to winning. Danny invited the children to discuss the ideas of the different teams (25, 26) which suggests inclusive practice involving every child. Some children expressed interest in the outcome of the presentations signifying their interest in competing.

Danny explained every child needed make a presentation using an imperative tone (28, 29) implying an inclusive activity. Lucy expressed eagerness to get involved (30), a sign that Danny had finally managed to capture the children's interest. Danny's purpose appeared to be to involve the children in exchanging ideas through team work. However, competitive activities also involve winners and losers. This might produce feelings of 'destructive inferiority' (Adler, 1973) operating on weaknesses, that they might not be able to reach the targets of their team. At the same time, the competitive positioning of children with feelings of inferiority might result in their outperforming other children by boosting their self-efficacy levels (Bandura, 1986).

The main features of Bam's classroom and her pedagogy will be examined next.

5.3.4 Bam's classroom: *'it's the whole child that we look at'*

5.3.4.1 The classroom layout

The layout and the arrangement of furniture (See Fig. 5.8a, b) in the classroom of year 6, suggests a pedagogy, where the criteria governing the presentation and distribution of knowledge lie with the teacher. It is different from Danny's classroom in that the tables and visual displays on the walls are arranged in neatly. The teacher's influence on the classroom organisation was apparent. There were five double desks with four to six students seated at each. The arrangement of desks in two rows seemed to suggest a participatory discourse with emphasis on team work. However, based on my observations, the children tended to work individually in most lessons. Even though the positioning of desks suggested participation and

collaboration, the children were not encouraged to talk to those at either the same or other tables during lessons.

The teaching style seemed to contradict the discourse of participation suggested in the arrangement of tables. The space between the tables allowed the teacher to observe pupils and possibly her aim was to encourage individual learning. Her posture and movement between tables inclined towards a monitoring teacher role where the instruction concentrated on task monitoring and management. As some of the children's seating did not enable eye contact with the teacher, her movement had to overcome this obstacle. Bam did not have a proper desk. She used a space next to the cupboards, on the right hand side of the classroom (Fig. 5.9) where she kept her folders and laptop. This suggests she did not mediate her authority through the position of her desk. The children's seating arrangements at tables (Fig. 5.8a, b) did not seem to facilitate interaction with the teacher. Some children struggled to face the white board and maintain eye contact with her. My observations suggest that the teacher moved between the tables to check progress and maintain contact with all the pupils.

Figure 5.8a **Sunny Hill School: Bam's classroom layout (year 6)-Back to front orientation**

Figure 5.8b **Sunny Hill School: Bam's classroom layout (year 6)-Front to back orientation**

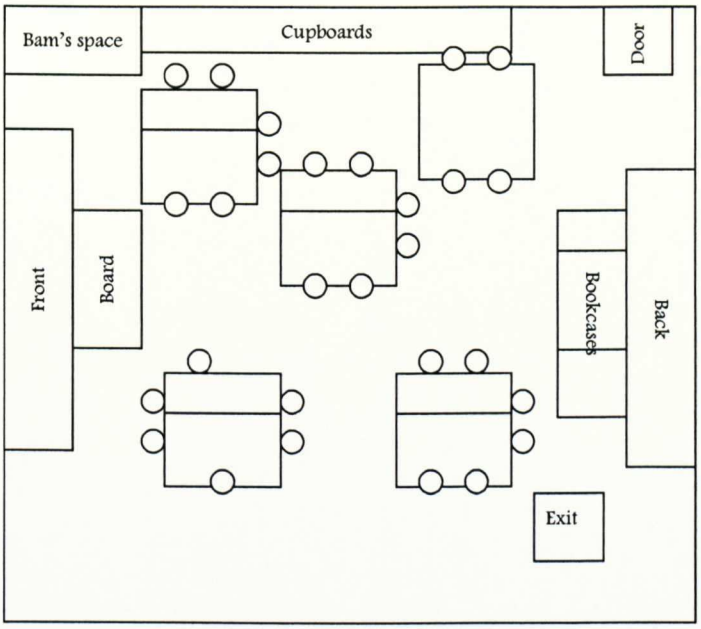


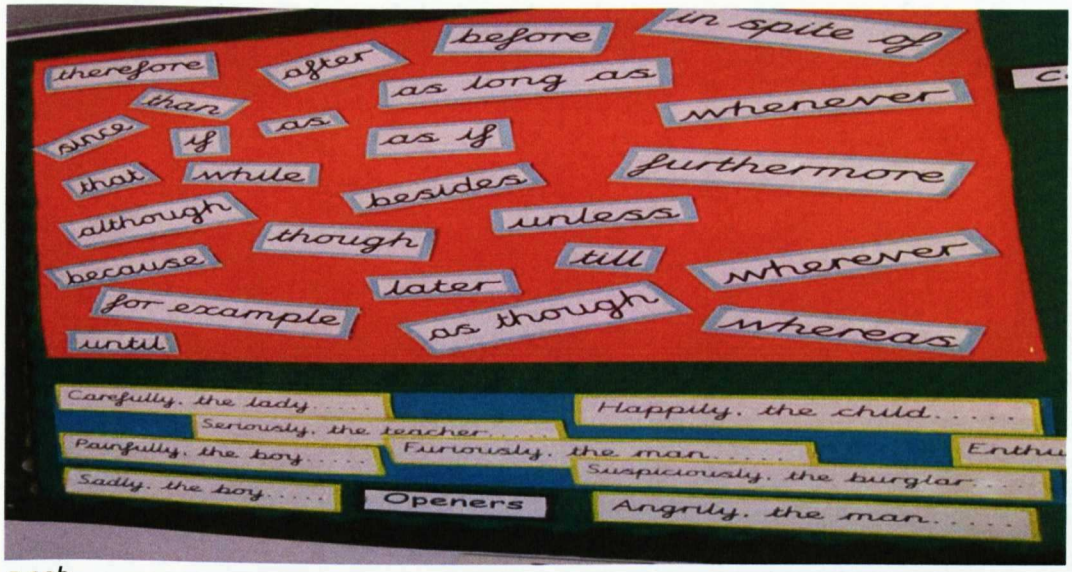
Figure 5.9 **Sunny Hill School: diagram of Bam's classroom layout (year 6)**

5.3.4.2The visual layout of the displays

The visual layout of the displays was carefully produced by Bam. All the displays, even the art work of the pupils were neatly organised on the classroom walls. Pupils' work was on the back and side walls of the classroom, whereas the teacher's posters were displayed at the front and above her space close to the cupboards. Posters displaying rules of behavioural management were at the back of the room. This created a sense of space that belonged to and was for the pupils (Fig. 5.8a,b). Moreover, three small bookcases with books for the students at the back of the room further support this claim.

The content of posters was teacher-written, word-processed and clearly framed with multiple coloured backgrounds. The teacher's position as the authority in the classroom was revealed in the organisation and criteria for producing classroom displays. Several displays (Fig.5.10 a, b, c) represented curriculum-content knowledge - grammar, literacy, numeracy, geography, and science - and concerned social and personal care issues. Bam mediated the content of the National Curriculum through the presentation of several posters placed in a prominent position at the front of the classroom in order to distribute information about the National Tests children are expected to take at the end of KS2. The colour, size and framing of the posters were all Bam's choices.

5.10a



5.10b

5.10c

Figures 5.10 **Posters of curriculum knowledge in Bam's classroom (year 6)**

Bam placed high value on behavioural management and communicated her rules through several posters. In this school, the teacher decides how firm the rules in her class are which made regulatory discourse more explicit and distinguishable from instructional discourse. Bam did not explicitly express what the rewards or sanctions might be for behaviour. There were rules through which pupils became aware of the teacher's expectations. She explained:

> Bam: I put down very firm boundaries and the children know what I will accept and what I won't accept but then if they go beyond the boundaries that I accept, then obviously they have to start paying me some time back... (2/4/10)

By contrast Danny's classroom had no posters displaying rules for behavioural management. He communicated his disapproval for disruptive behaviour through gaze and speech.

A display presenting the *golden* rules of good behaviour is in Fig. 5.11. Bam, who produced this display, places herself in a strictly structured teacher-student pedagogical relationship. She communicated her authority by determining the *do's* and *don'ts* in her pedagogic relationship with the children. The words *do* and *do not* seem to leave space for children to act freely. In terms of form and content, the message is displayed on golden, laminated plastic paper which shows two faces. One looks happy representing the *do's*, while the other face is sad, referring to the *don'ts*. The golden colour, the black capital letters of the title and the black framing make the content appear more formal and serious.

The second poster (Fig. 5.12) placed below the first and engages children in a formal agreement with the teacher. The stylised content of the display conveys the gist of a golden rule agreement which the children sign and agree to *abide by*. It seems to be a binding agreement that makes the children responsible for what they have signed, which is a way of interjecting the school's values into the world of children. The verb *abide* places the children in a weak position as compared to the powerful position of the teacher. The appearance of the message suggests the strategic use of a formal document sealing the agreement between the children and the teacher.

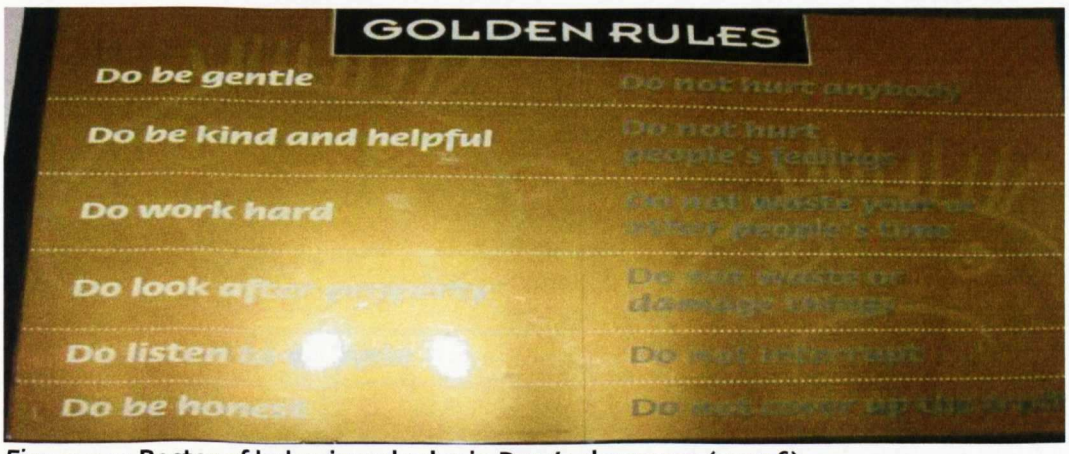


Figure 5.11 **Poster of behavioural rules in Bam's classroom (year 6)**

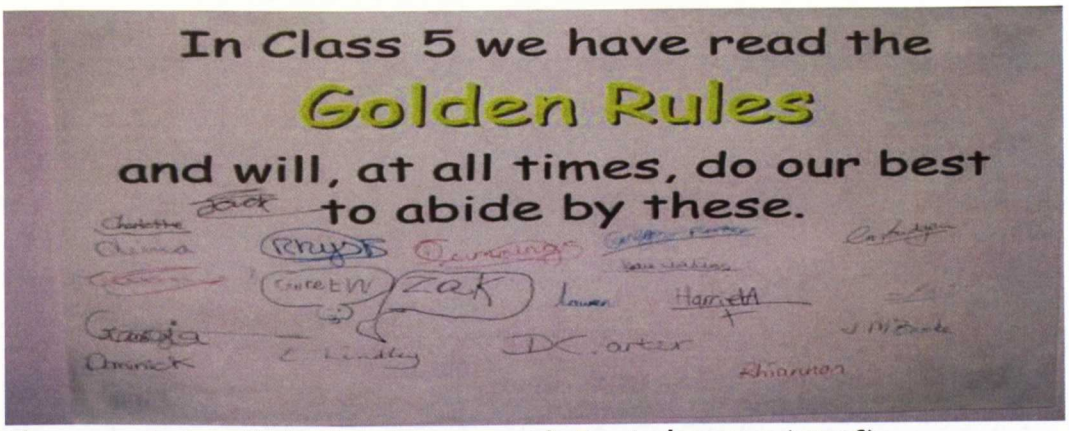


Figure 5.12 Poster of behavioural agreement in Bam's classroom (year 6)

Figure 5.13 Poster of manners in Bam's classroom (year 6)

Figure 5.14 Poster of pupils' drawings in Bam's classroom (year 6)

The bright yellow and black letters of the agreement draw the children's attention to the content. The black letters underline the formality of the agreement between the students and the teacher. The signatures of the children beneath the word-processed content are in different colours and letters.

A similar poster (Fig.5.13) displayed on the door of the classroom was ready-made and pointed out the taken-for-granted western educational definition of *respect* as a set of skills and competencies in communication with others. The photos on the poster depict different modes of communication. The message conveyed to children was to maintain a positive self-image while developing good relations with others. Specific words in each text were highlighted in bold coloured letters to attract the children's attention. The children were able to construct a specific identity through the procedural ground rules stated by adults. They were required to learn to act in rational and responsible ways. Adult figures in the picture represented constructive role models and seemed to play a crucial role in developing the children's individual identities.

The children's artwork was also on display. Some drawings represented the religious background of Jewish people, indicating that the children were exposed to different traditions. The technique for drawing (Fig. 5.14) seems to be homogeneous because most of the work looks similar except for the colours. Drawings of Jewish symbols were displayed in the same orange or green frames with the same blue background. This suggested that the criteria for the production and organisation of artwork in a methodical way had been decided by the teacher. This made for asymmetrical and hierarchical social relations between the teacher and children, with them positioned as passive recipients in the production of artwork.

On the whole, the children were engaged visually in a learning environment which encouraged obedience to the rules. The spatial arrangement of the classroom did not help the children to possess the space. The children were grouped at tables but their interaction in lessons was constrained by the behavioural rules set by the teacher. She believes that learning should rely on rewards and sanctions and found it essential for children.

> Bam: to enjoy what they are doing so to make it fun, to make it interactive, and to provide different opportunities. So to make visual opportunities, and oral opportunities, so they can do things as well. (2/4/10)

She claimed to believe in different opportunities for learning. However, it seemed that Bam's organisation of the classroom created a space where visual displays relating to core subjects of the curriculum are central. Their position at the front of the room divides the space into children's and teacher's areas. She organised furniture and visual displays in a symmetrical manner which makes it less challenging for children.

5.3.4.3 Bam's classroom as a sign of pedagogy

Bam's year 6 classroom contained some contrasting features. The organisation of the classroom is orderly apparent in the arrangement of tables and visual displays. The tables are in two rows in which the children sit in groups, which encouraged the participation and sharing of the children in activities (Figure 5.8). However, Bam maintained her pedagogical authority as she constrained the children's conversations with each other, whether at the same or another table. As she explained, she preferred them to work individually, particularly, in the core lessons of the curriculum such as in Mathematics, English and Science. The National Curriculum mediated the ways she organised individual learning and in the content of some of the displays demonstrating rules and tips in English and Mathematics. As emphasis was placed on individual work, ccommunication between the teacher and the children tended to be monologic and hierarchical. The teacher maintained her position as the distributor of knowledge and the children were the passive recipients of knowledge.

5.3.4.4 Verbal communication

The next conversation develops between Bam and her students in the classroom.

Excerpt 5.2 Conversation between Bam and her students in class (4/3/10)

Bam:	*No one should be talking at all... You should not be talking... Zak, sit properly! Good afternoon class 6*
Students:	*Good afternoon, Mrs Bam*
Bam:	*When the bell rings it takes you about five minutes to line up. You need to be sure that when you hear the first bell you need to come and change your trainers and go to the toilet. When you have an assembly no one will go to the toilet. You need to make sure you are lining up on time and you arrange your things. Is that clear?*
Students:	*Yes, Mrs Bam*
Bam:	*What you should not be doing in an assembly?*
Zak:	*Students should not laugh*
Bam:	*They should not laugh Zak, because they annoy others...anything else?*
Jo:	*We should not talk, laugh*
Bam:	*Yes... anyone else?*
Mary:	*They should wear their super learner band*
Bam:	*It's important to wear your super learner band. It's important for the school...*
Peter:	*Should not go to the toilet*
Bam:	*If you do that then you will lose four break times. It is a warning and we will become stricter. Is that clear?*
Students:	*Right, Mrs. Bam*
Bam:	*You need to ask politely the workers when you lose your ball and you must have good manners. Any rubbish should be thrown in the bin and not on the ground. Keep it nice and clean....Now, think about a time that you were extremely proud of yourselves and why were you...Anyone? Yes?*
Steve:	*I ran five miles on my bike*
Bam:	*Yes?*

Leo:	*About my full marks in my football team*
Susan:	*I'm doing piano lessons.*
Bam:	*Full marks in spelling tests was the time that made me proud of myself when I was at your age...You want people to recognise that achievement of yours... anyone else? Why were you proud?*
Peter:	*I'm proud of my super learner band*
Bam:	*Yes...You...*
John:	*I got full marks on mathematics*
Bam:	*I am really pleased to hear when you feel proud of yourselves and what you have done in the classroom... Sensibly... can you put your hands together?*

The verbal interaction of Bam with the students appear to involve monologic elements as she comments more on the students' responses. The main theme of the dialogue seems to be whether or not the students are aware and abided by the rules of the classroom or the school. Bam's rules of behavioural management are applied when she instructs the students about their behaviour (*1, 2*). She particularly focuses on Zak's behaviour, one of the students with SEN in her classroom, and uses an imperative tone to comment on his behaviour. The imperative tone is identified throughout her interaction with the students. Her rhetorical questions (*8, 20*) seem to seek confirmation from the students about the behavioural rules set by her. The negative question (*10*) seems to imply the teacher's disapproval of disruptive behaviour as she initiates a discursive interaction with the students to monitor their awareness of the rules. The conversation is set based on what the students *should or should not* do. The students' responses include *should* and *should not* (*11, 13, 18*) which suggests their subjugation to the rules. Zak's response (*11*) seems to prompt her response (*12*) as Zak's did not seem to be what she expected to hear. The same feature occurs in *16, 17* about the rules set by the school and the importance of students following them. Her reference to the punishment for disruptive behaviour (*19, 20*) seems to communicate her authority and asymmetrical relations with the students. The students' responses (*21*) position them as passive recipients to these rules. She socialises the students to the values of her classroom as she instructs them how they *need to* (*22, 23*) talk and behave. Her question (*25*) about pride opens a new topic and some students respond with their proud moments (*26, 28, 29*) which do not reflect any behavioural or academic rules. Bam seems to restore focus on academic when she refers to herself (*30, 31*) and communicates her authority and expectations of what she considers appropriate for them to be proud of at their age. Two students (*33, 35*) respond according to Bam's expectations. Her response (*36*) conveys her satisfaction while she brings the class back to order (*37*).

The next section summarises in a table the main features identified in the two classrooms.

5.3.5 Discussion

There is no specific classroom model in Sunny Hill. Both classrooms - year 4/5 and 6 - were different in terms of layout and visual displays. The multimodal way of studying both classrooms captured the limitations and the potential for meaning making, and highlighted the positioning of the children's different access to knowledge, different interaction with peers and different pedagogical relationship with the teacher. The main differences are presented in Table. 5.1

***Table 5.1* Features of Danny's and Bam's classrooms**

Sunny Hill Classrooms Features	**Danny's year 4/5 classroom**	**Bam's year 6 classroom**
Teacher's perspective	The specific pedagogic practices for the students with SEN placed higher value on the academic taking away the social side of their development.	The students with SEN could not access the same curriculum as the rest of their peers, needed to be categorised in ability groups and to be provided with special resources, as the teacher pointed out.
The classroom layout	The classroom layout seemed to encourage children to collaborate and exchange ideas, suggesting a participatory/democratic discourse. However, the students worked in ability groups. Some lessons were in groups or individually. Even in group tasks, the interaction between different tables was inhibited.	The layout of the classroom suggested that the criteria governing the presentation and distribution of knowledge lie with the teacher. The arrangement of desks seemed to suggest a participatory discourse with emphasis on team work. However, the children tended to work individually in most lessons.
The visual layout of the displays	More emphasis was placed on the instructional discourse and less on the rules which regulated social order. Children represented their own features in the production of art works.	Regulatory discourse was more explicit and distinguishable from the instructional discourse. Pupils were constrained by the teacher's practice about how to produce their art works.
Classroom as a sign of pedagogy	The teacher interacted with children to help them with their tasks. He expressed his authority less and positioned himself in less hierarchical social l relations with the students as they participated in the production of knowledge.	The teacher provided support in terms of supervision and surveillance. Social relationships between teacher and children were more asymmetrical/ hierarchical as the teacher dominated the formation of learning.
The verbal communication between the teacher and the students	Patterns of communicative interactions between the teacher and children were mainly dialogic and interactive	Communication between the teacher and children tended to be monologic and hierarchical

5.4 Panoptical Heights School

5.4.1 The teachers' perspective

The National Curriculum guidelines for teachers whose students are required to reach a level of academic success outline homogeneous content and methods. The interviews with teachers and teaching assistants, and classroom data revealed conditions for developing the potential of individual students go beyond an individual teacher's practices. The organising impact of the curriculum is closely related to school policies, streaming and curriculum requirements, while their realisation in the classroom reflects the teacher's perspective of how to incorporate the official curriculum into a personal teaching style and philosophy. Cas (pseudonym), the teacher of year 5, explained how the structure of his teaching is influenced by the policies, and identified gaps in his pedagogy because it is organised around the requirements of the official curriculum based solely on externally determined criteria with lower priority for children's social and emotional needs, thus his autonomy in the classroom is limited.

> Cas: Oh, this is the magic one thing, isn't it? If I had a wish, well, that's a difficult one because when you have a structure thrown at you for so many years... it's quite a difficult one, to think about, I'd certainly I would do...more group work, more interaction, social interaction between children, working together, team work...more of the drama, and the art and the creative side... (6/4/10)

He expressed his educational vision as unfeasible (*magic, wish, see below).* He described a pedagogic style emphasising a holistic and innovative approach to children's education developed under the auspices of an educational philosophy promoting creativity and the socialisation of children through group-orientated activities. It could be argued that deviation from mainstream teaching structures can be realised in *invisible* pedagogies (Bernstein, 1990) where the rules that determine the criteria for distributing knowledge and maintaining social order are realised in implicit pedagogic practices, in Cas' words *'group work...social interaction...drama...art...creative side'.* In this respect, the single-mindedness and the overemphatic application of government-driven pedagogy can inhibit creativity, novelty and the personal contribution of teachers and students to construct an inclusive and noninterventionist educational context. Put another way, pedagogy may be organised around the requirements of an inflexible curriculum based solely on externally determined criteria which do not prioritise children's social and emotional needs.

Katie, the year 5 teaching assistant, suggested that shifting teachers' interest from students' academic performance to the social side of their development could help children feel included. Children could construct their identities and develop their own position to what they discuss with their peers (*friendship issues, social awareness*).

> Katie: I think you've got to balance the two. I mean obviously the teachers, they've got to get the results and they've got to be seen to be moving the children on you know sub levels ...something more on the social side...get them more socially interactive.... So citizenship side of things... Occasionally we have you know friendship issues.... or perhaps if we'd got something a bit more about their social awareness... (6/4/10)

She stressed the importance of balanced curricular practices for children with SEN with realistic goals and the development of skills. Unsuccessful attempts to meet academic targets might undermine the children's efforts and their emotional well-being.

Panoptical Heights had low grades of 3 and 4 for pupils' achievement, behaviour, their social, spiritual and cultural development and the extent to which they develop skills for their future economic welfare in a recent Ofsted report. *How is pedagogy realised in Cas' classroom in relation to such factors and what kind of pedagogical relations have developed?* This question is explored in the next sections.

5.4.2 Cas's classroom: *'making sure that it's a happy place to be working'*

5.4.2.1 The classroom layout

To explore the explicit ways Cas' pedagogy is realised, I examined the orchestration of semiotics in the displays and spatial arrangements of his classroom. The classroom layout seemed an attractive, open-ended context with several posters by the teacher and children hanging on the walls and above the tables. The spatial arrangement of desks looks complicated in this classroom. Seating was organised in an asymmetrical manner, with tables pushed together to make a unit and single desks. Five or 6 children sat at each of the three pushed together units, and two children sat alone at two single desks and at a distance from the rest (Figures 5.15a/b and 5.16).

The spaces between the tables allowed the teacher to move around and survey the students. The table seating could encourage the democratic discourse of participation if the children at the same table acted as a team when doing their school work. However, this did not seem to happen with all the children as three were sitting in single desks and could only work with a child near them. Two single desks were isolated from the tables where two children with SEN sat facing the wall (Fig. 5.15b).

Figure 5.15a Panoptical Heights School: Cas' classroom layout (year 5) Front to back

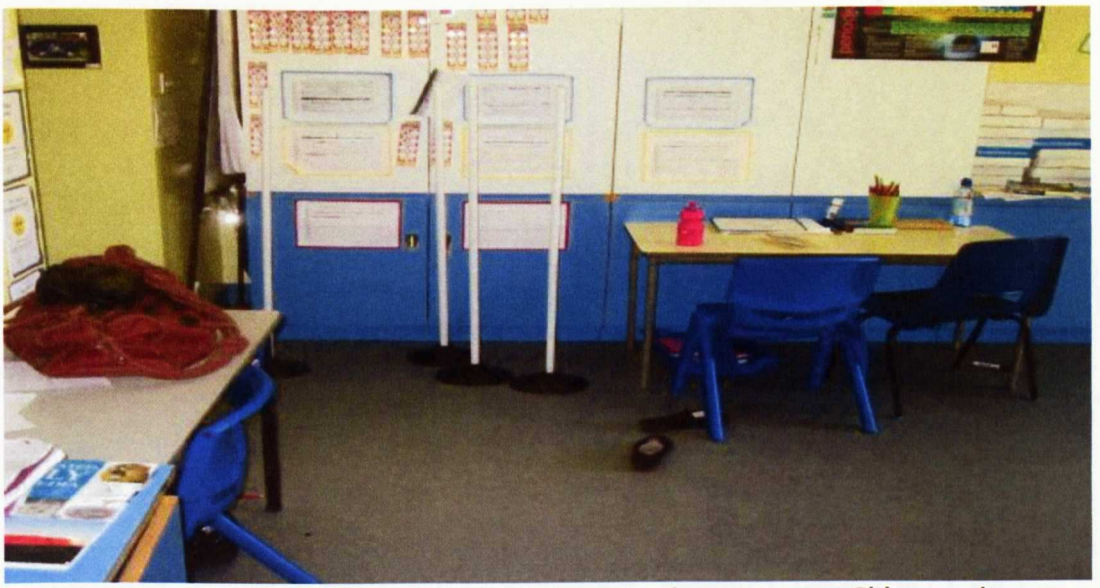


Figure 5.15b Panoptical Heights School: Cas' classroom layout (year 5) Side near door

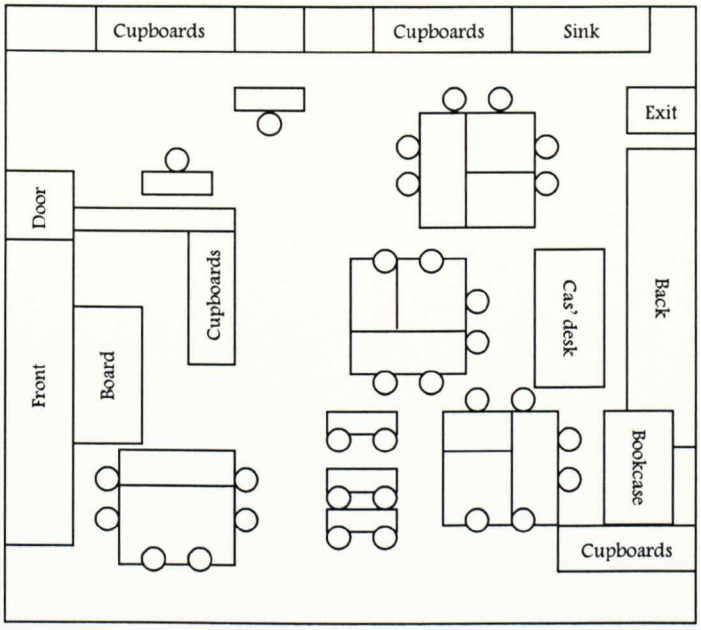


Figure 5.16 **Panoptical Heights School: diagram of Cas' classroom layout (year 5)**

Cas permitted children at the same or other tables to communicate with each other, through interaction and dialogue. Putting children at single desks is, according to Cas, based on the criteria of teaching according to ability and on behaviour management. The seating of children in group tables (Fig. 5.16) makes it difficult to maintain eye contact with the teacher. Children had to twist round to see the teacher, which implies Cas' need to denote his own space. On the other hand, the placing of his desk at the back of the room made his authority less visible. The space between his desk and the children's tables could indicate the teacher's need to check the progress and behaviour of his students.

Cas communicated his authority from the front, where he preferred to teach next to the white board. He did not often move between the tables. He called children to his desk at the back or to the front of the room if they had any questions, which might create distance between himself and the children. In his teaching he seemed to be quite flexible and encouraged all the children to take part in group work, exchange ideas and freely express themselves.

5.4.2.2The visual layout of the displays

The visual displays appeared to be based around various subjects. For example, maps, grammatical rules, rules for literacy and numeracy, reward schemes, copies of famous artists' themes were presented on colourful paper on the walls. Some children's drawings were hung on string above the desks. The teacher's influence was apparent in the neat way the posters were presented with colourful backgrounds and the teacher's posters were word-processed. Several displays indicated the progress of children and the rewards (Fig. 5.17a, b, c) they attained throughout the academic year. Cas placed high value on the behaviour of the

children and mediated his concern through several posters of rewards and sanctions. Some displayed awards for the tidiest classroom and a sticker chart listed good behaviour and performance. There were also *good choice ticket charts* to reward good behaviour and academic performance, also presented in bright colours. Some had a simple format while others, which were ready-made, seemed professional and impressive in colour and design, to attract the children's interest.

Figures 5.17a

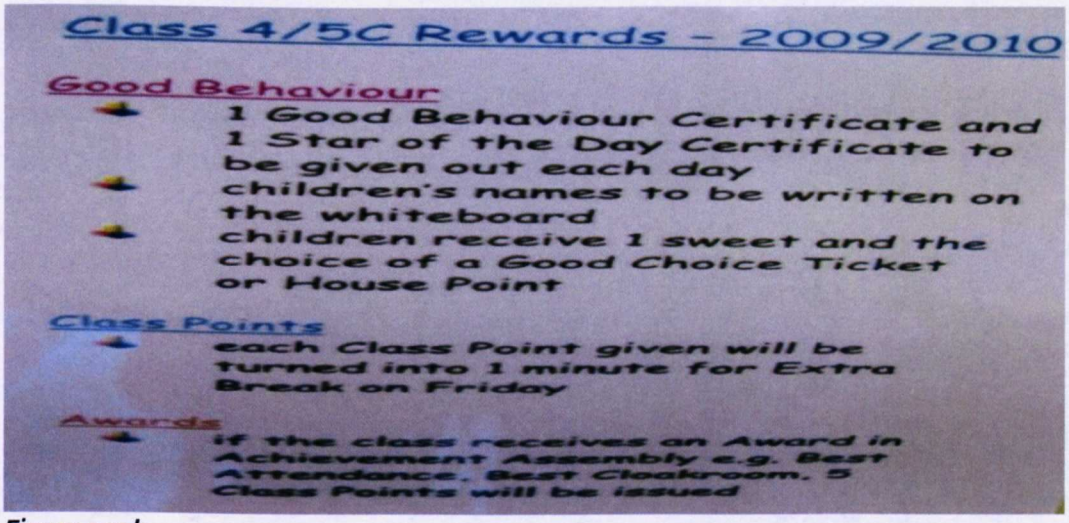
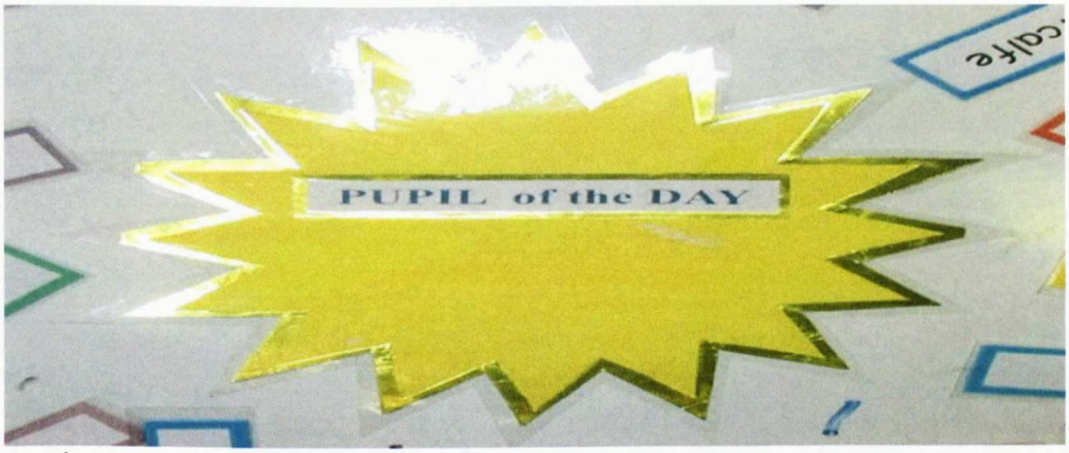


Figure 5.17b

Figure 5.17c



5.17d

***Figures 5.17a-d* Posters of rewards and sanctions in Cas' classroom (year 5)**

The content of the second poster (Fig.5.17b) was a simple clear structure on white paper explaining the rules for receiving rewards individually or collectively on the basis of good behaviour and performance. These signs reinforced the expected compliance of the children with institutional behavioural rules which stimulated their need to strive for superiority.

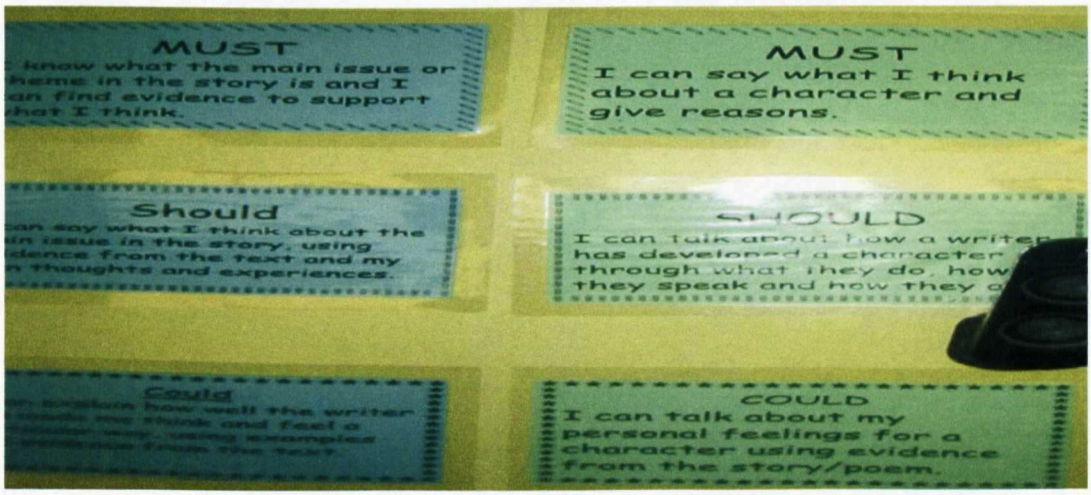
Fig. 5.17c displays f ways the teacher monitored the children's behaviour. There are seven different levels, each a different colour and size using luminous paper. Each level conveys a different message starting with a *reminder of positive behaviour* and ending with the word *seclusion*. Children put their names on the chart according to in what way they had misbehaved in the classroom - by fighting, hitting, kicking, or defiance, or leaving the classroom without permission, or racial abuse. Each level had a different colour; the last three are dark orange, then red and finally grey

emphasising the seriousness of the situation. The child loses some of her rights, for example, play time or *golden time*, depending on the level where she writes her name. The form, content and semiotic function of the displays suggested the children follow fixed behavioural rules. Institutional power and the school's values are imposed on the children's identities.

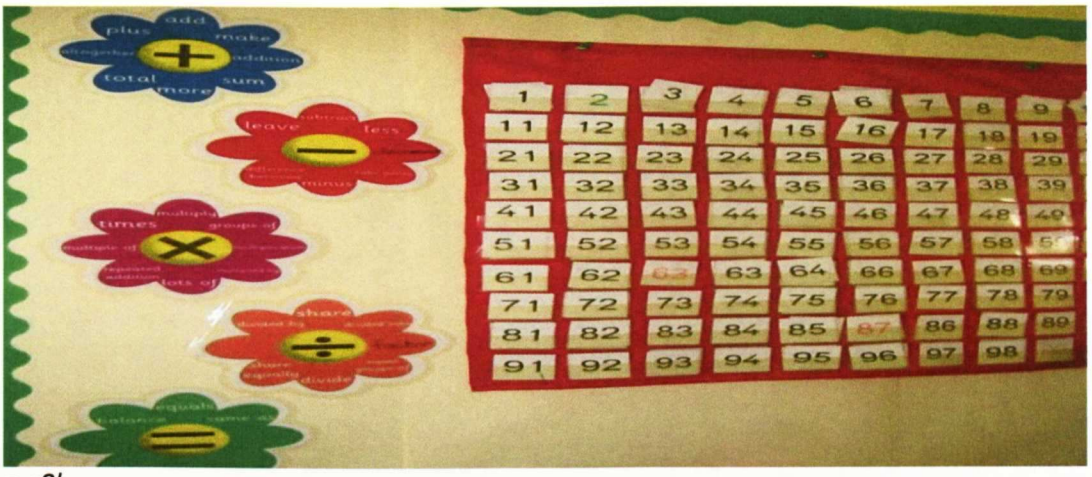
The meaning-making of these displays involves behavioural management. Cas believes that his practices

> Cas: give them the opportunity to put it right without being on top of them all the time. It's important to let them take responsibility for their own actions. Yes, if it becomes a health and safety issue for the rest of the class, obviously, I have to intervene. But most of the time, they, more or less, sort themselves out. (6/4/10)

Cas's transmission of the curriculum was realised through posters displayed at the front of the classroom, next to the smart board and on the side walls. They present aspects of Literacy and of Numeracy (Figs. 5.18a, b). The Literacy poster (5.18a) was carefully organised with messages in laminated card arranged in two lists with blue and green backgrounds. The content was word-processed, with a card devoted to *must, should* or *could* concerning the ways children must/should/could write about the theme of a story and about a character. On the other hand, the Numeracy poster had laminated cards with colorful flowers which depicted mathematical operations and symbols. Numbers from 1-100 were on small cards against a red background to make them attractive.



5.18a

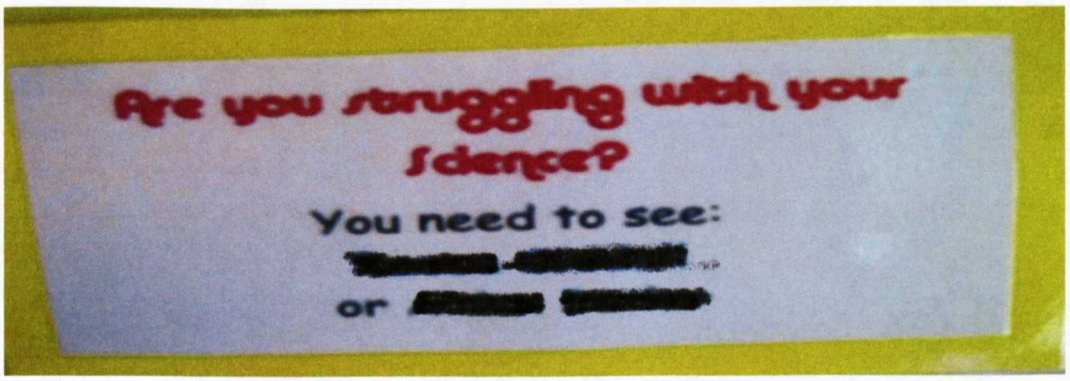


5.18b

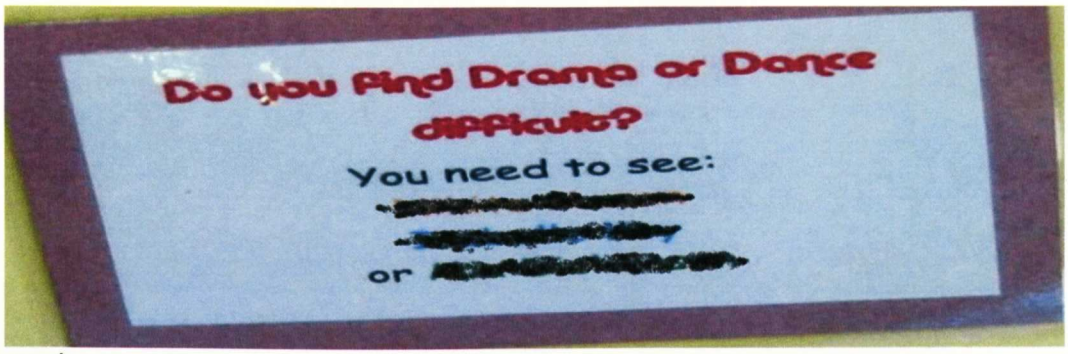
***Figures 5.18a, b* Posters displaying Literacy and Numeracy in Cas' classroom (year 5)**

In addition to the posters about curriculum subjects, some displays (see Fig. 5.19a, b) underlined the importance of peer socialisation, inviting the children to contribute in an activity which stimulates learning with a 'more capable peer' (Vygotsky, 1978) so that children can interact with each other, improve their knowledge and become aware of their strengths and weaknesses. It could be seen as promoting inclusivity, as all the children are asked to participate.

In addition, children were able to become active agents in the production of knowledge as the teacher gave them the responsibility and freedom to distribute knowledge in their own way. This practice can encourage a symmetrical relationship between teacher and students; Cas was not presented as an authority figure dominating knowledge. In terms of the visual presentation of the displays, the framing and lamination was carefully produced by Cas and the content relating several subjects other than Literacy, Numeracy and Science means children with problems of expression or coordination could also gain something positive from this.



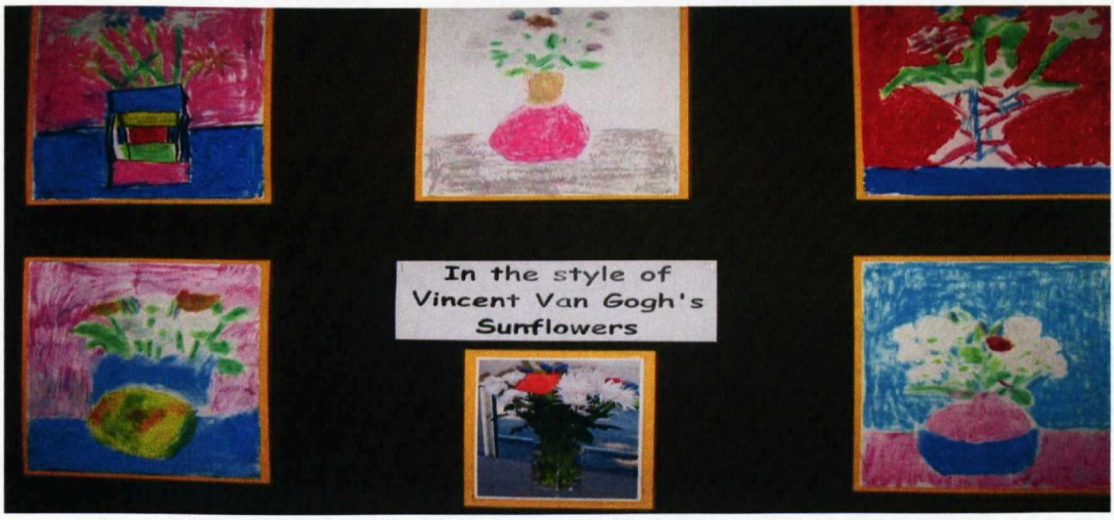
5.19a



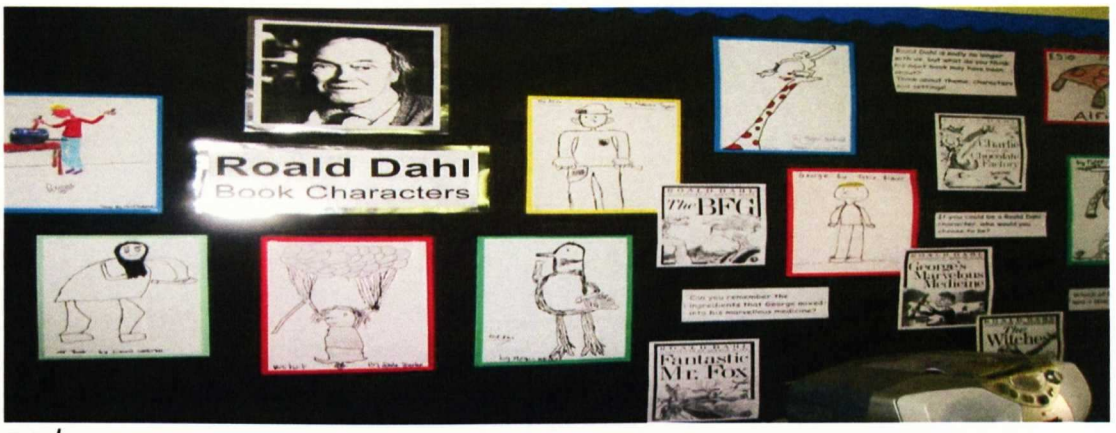
5.19b

***Figures 5.19a, b* Posters of peer support in Cas' classroom (year 5)**

Cas' choice of children's drawings constructed a visual balance in the learning environment, with roughly equal displays produced by the teacher and the children. The teacher's influence is visible in the framing, the cardboard background and the written content of some of the displays. The children's drawings have distinct features in their design and colour (Figs. 5.20a, b). The theme and the time within which artworks should be finished are regulated by Cas. From my observations, Cas was explicit about the steps through which the features of Van Gogh's *Starry night* should be produced. There was freedom in the way the theme was reproduced by each child but regulation in the process of production. The children selected the character they wanted to reproduce from Roald Dahl's books; however, Cas decided on the pace within which drawings were to be produced, and organised the framing and arrangement of the pictures on the posters.



5.20a



5.20b

***Figures 5.20a, b* Posters of the children's drawings in Cas' classroom (year 5)**

In short, there seemed to be contradictions in the ways pedagogy was realised in this classroom. The children were given opportunities to interact and to participate in activities to become active and creative learners. On the other hand, the teacher's decisions about the seating arrangements and the pace, sequence and setting of displays, constrained the children's freedom.

5.4.2.3 Cas' classroom as a sign of pedagogy

The visual displays and spatial arrangement of Cas' classroom suggested an environment where the children were able actively engage in the construction of knowledge. Cas' pedagogy involved participation and democratic dialogue between the children. However, teaching from the front of the classroom could create the impression of an asymmetrical relationship, although his desk was at the back of the room. He encouraged interactive tasks on the smart board, making learning enjoyable and challenging in the Science, Literacy and Numeracy lessons. For example, in Science, the children were involved in experiments using equipment in mixed ability groupings, an opportunity for the children that sat at single desks to collaborate with their peers and exchange ideas.

The layout of the classroom presented an open learning environment with the children's artwork and a broad perspective of subject knowledge, although no displays of different cultural backgrounds were present. In the lessons, the teacher allowed interaction between children either at the same table or between tables. However, there were variations in the seating arrangements; some children sat in pairs or groups and others at single desks (5.16). From my observations, the photos and from Cas himself, two children with academic and behavioural problems sat at single desks, as a way of managing their behaviours, away from their peers, restricting both their verbal and non-verbal interaction with their peers and *the teacher as they needed to turn round in their seats* and inhibiting their inclusion in some tasks. Tasks were carried out either in groups or individually depending on the lesson, but the teacher preferred them to work in groups.

Cas interacted with his students in lessons; for example, he asked the children to sit on the carpet at the front of the smart board and they were all encouraged to participate. He asked questions and the children answered or used the smart board to choose an answer. This interested most of the children and promoted inclusion. Cas emphasised the importance of behaviour through several displays of rewards and sanctions for behaviour. Behavioural management is a problem in this school and was identified as such in one of the Ofsted reports. Other posters rewarded good performance and sticker charts, good choice ticket charts and sweets were ways of reinforcing progress. He described several school practices for regulating the children's behaviour in the classroom and in the playground and underlined the effectiveness of suppressing disruptive behaviour and maintaining order.

> Cas: On being firm but fair...I give most children one, one opportunity if they have done something wrong to put it right... We actually have peer bodies... for playground... we then use the chart system... but it's an individual who...has specific learning difficulties from their behaviour side... I...give that child a wide berth... let them take responsibility for their own actions. (6/4/10)

This position suggested a firm teacher-student pedagogic relationship. In his pedagogy he chose *...to give...a wide berth* and communicated this position explicitly through his tone of voice to the children and through *chart systems* and *peer bodies*. Behavioural and discursive rules were interjected into the children's consciousness for them to adjust their academic and behavioural performance. The students with SEN at the single desks were marginalised and were given less space to interact either with the teacher or the peers. Cas pointed out that separating these students from the others had a beneficial effect on behavioural management.

5.4.2.4 Verbal communication

The following dialogue occurred between Cas and his class. He wanted to support the children's academic progress and good behaviour through material awards to stimulate the children's need to strive for superiority.

Excerpt 5.3 **Mixed ability group (Year 5) Cas' classroom (22/2/10)**

Cas:	*Now sit down! Let's see who's going to get today... the award of good behaviour and the award of good work. Will you listen?*	1
Children:	*Shhhh! Listen!*	
Dianne:	*Stop it!*	5
Tony:	*Ok... Ok*	
Cas:	*Now, let's see... Josh gets the award of good behaviour and...*	
Children	*[clapping hands]*	
Cas:	*And...Sam... gets the award of good work...*	
Sam:	*YES!*	10
Children:	*[clapping hands]*	
Cas:	*Now the rest of you... come and get your sweets and tickets please...*	

The teacher uses an imperative tone ("*Now sit down!*"), in his effort to shift children's attention to the awards for good behaviour and good work. The children seem at first disengaged from the teacher's talk as he tried to gain their attention (*Will you listen? 2, 3*). Some children communicated their interest in listening and tried to persuade their peers to do the same through the imperative tone in their speech (*Listen! 4*). Diane's request (*Stop it! 5*) to a peer suggests her frustration as she conveyed her wish to listen to the teacher. Tony's response suggests his compliance with her request (*O.k., O.k.6*). The teacher took some time to announce the names of the children who got rewards while he implicitly expressed his authority to decide the criteria for the awards. The children seemed to participate in the dialogue by clapping their hands, which suggests agreement with the teacher's decisions. Sam expressed his excitement through the heightened volume of his voice (*YES, 10*). The teacher invited the rest of the children to claim rewards for their efforts, conveying inclusiveness and encouragement for the children to participate in activities. However, it seemed to separate them from the award-winning students as Cas used *now* (*12*), which divides the present action from the previous one.

The practice of rewarding children's efforts verbally might strengthen their individual academic efforts. Students' individualistic positioning in practices that encourage and praise their mastery of tasks could affect their social relationships with their classmates. It could be argued that the main motive in competitive practices is to reinforce rivalry and academic success. This might motivate some children and strengthen their self-efficacy.

Based on the analysis of the multimodal signs of the visual displays and spatial arrangements of Cas' classroom, the main points are summarised in Table 5.2 below.

***Table 5.2* Features of Cas' classroom**

Panoptical Heights classroom Features	**Cas's year 4/5 classroom**
Teacher's perspective	The teacher's practices emphasised both the instructional and regulatory discourses.
The classroom layout	Although the classroom layout seemed to encourage the collaboration of the students, the students with SEN were physically marginalised. However, in group tasks the students with SEN had the opportunity to work with peers under the teacher's monitoring.
The visual layout of the displays	More emphasis was placed on the rules that mediated social order and behaviour management.
Classroom as a sign of pedagogy	The teacher expressed his authority as he set the criteria on which the students had to produce their works and arranged the seating of the students. The classroom invited both students' and teacher's works.
The verbal communication between the teacher and the students	Teacher involved in interactive tasks with children. He asked questions and children responded. He encouraged the participation of all the children in lessons.

I now present the multimodal analysis of the Nova Spectrum School.

5.5 Nova Spectrum School

5.5.1 The teacher's perspective

In this school, teachers highlighted the psychological and spiritual aspects of learning to help children develop a full sense of themselves as part of a holistic approach to the world and the people who live and work around them. Children were encouraged to help each other with school work, to participate in extra-curricular activities, prepare social events, sing together and work together on the land. These practices underpinned the production of integrated, spiritual knowledge and are intertwined in child-centred educational philosophy (Steiner, 1919). This school practised non-interventionist education responding to the *whole child*, which refers to the balance between 'the child's whole being-thinking, feeling, and willing' (Steiner, 2000: ix). Children were taught Steiner's curriculum and did not take part in National Tests. Rudolf Steiner's philosophy is based on the idea of balanced education related to age-appropriateness within which teacher and students co-produce knowledge through collective and creative activities.

5.5.2 Bob's classroom: *'I am there for the needs of all children'*
5.5.2.1 The classroom layout

This classroom (Fig. 5.22) was an open space, which seemed to be inviting and attractive, with big windows allowing the sun and air to come in. The desks were arranged in three rows of single and double wooden desks, all facing the front of the classroom and in relation to the teacher's gaze. The distance between desks was small (Fig.5.21 a, b).

There were two black boards at the front of the room. The school seemed to resist the contemporary pedagogic fashion of computers and smart boards for transmitting knowledge to students and to prefer more traditional methods. The teacher's chair was at the front of the room facing the children's desks, which allowed the children to maintain eye contact with him. Bob stayed at the front of the classroom, which helped develop a discourse of transmission. Through his posture, he represented an authority figure dominating the transmission of knowledge. The management of behaviour and supervision of tasks might have been other reasons for teaching from the front. Bob's movements changed as he moved around the desks to support children or check their progress and he sometimes sat next to them. His movements facilitated his interactions with the children. Bob's desk was on the left at the back of the classroom (Fig.5.21b) making his authority less visible. In front of the windows, there was a space for children to place their water colours and aprons which they used for painting and sculpture. The two sinks with the colourful pots and plants at the front of the big windows (5.21b) made the space appealing as it created a homely, informal atmosphere.

5.21a

5.21 b

Figures 5.21 a, b Nova Spectrum School: Bob's classroom layout (year 4/5)

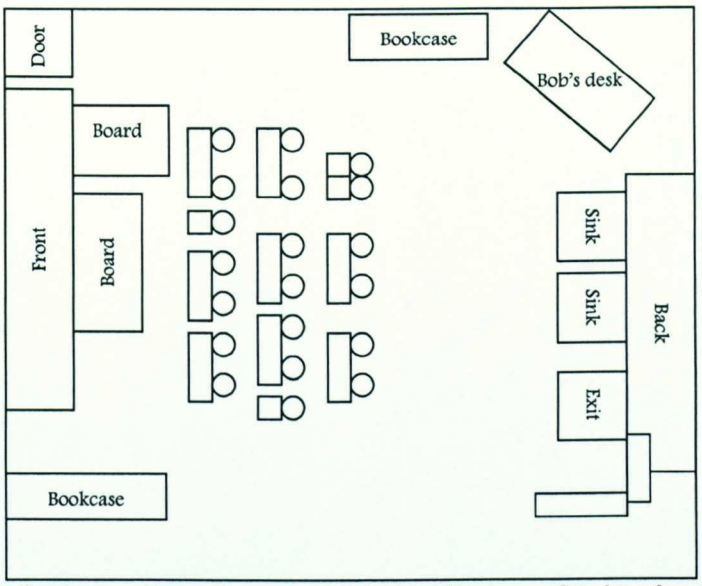


Figure 5.22 **Nova Spectrum School: diagram of Bob's classroom layout (year 4/5)**

Various items like glass bottles and plastic caps were on a small table next to the sinks. In the right hand corner of the room, was a space where the children placed their bags and coats. There was a bookcase for children in the left hand corner of the classroom (Fig. 5.22). This was one of the areas for displaying children's drawings.

The drawings of the children and a map were the only visual displays in the room. On entering the classroom, it became clear that the children possessed their classroom space. The space with the two blackboards and teacher's desk were the signs through which he indicated his space. The objects were arranged in an asymmetrical manner around the room. A small bookcase (Fig. 5.22) situated next to the teacher's desk was full of books on various subjects. The children were exposed to the histories of various civilisations and cultures, creating open educational content in which knowledge was not seen as a one-sided concept. The photograph of Bob's daughter next to a photo of children on an educational trip displayed informality in the relationship between the teacher and students as well as intimacy.

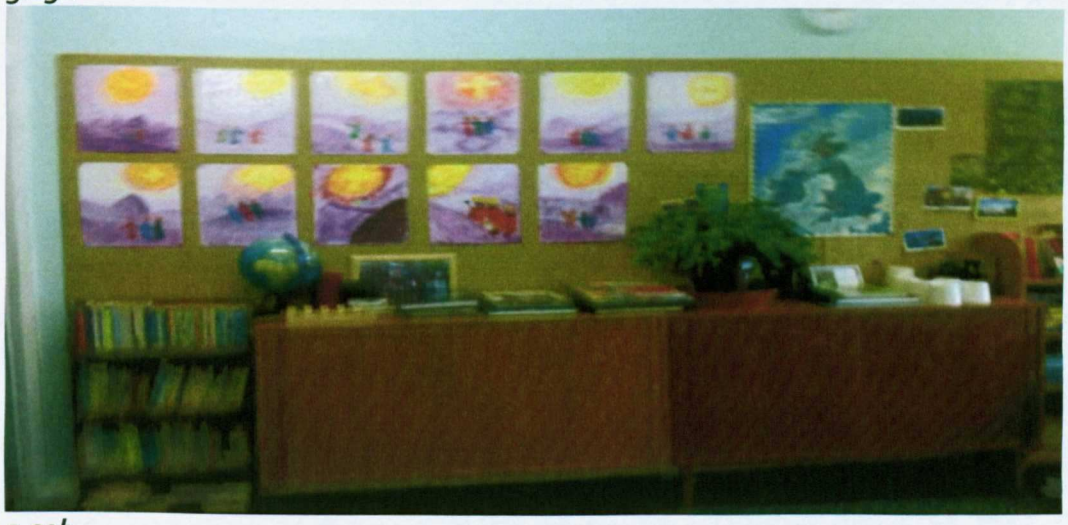
5.5.2.2The visual layout of the displays

The children's drawings were displayed on the right and left hand side walls of the classroom. There was also an atlas of the world and another small bookcase. Most drawings were inspired by mythology, religion or History. The teacher selected the subject and the children chose what they wanted to portray within it. Most of the time, the subject was based on a Steiner themes. Overall, there was a specific time, usually three to four weeks, within which subjects and drawings, paintings or sculptures were to be completed. From my field notes, Bob told the children which procedure to follow in their work. For example, in painting, he showed children the sequence for building up the main parts of a pattern and the movements of the

hand. Bob explained that Art is a creative activity through which children express their personal feelings and make personal choices of the colours to use (Fig. 5.23a, b, c), allowing them to apply some of their own criteria in the process of drawing. Moreover, the way Art is produced changes as the child moves on through different developmental stages.

In terms of the visual organisation of the displays, Bob did not use specific framing techniques, only plain white backgrounds, but did decide where to place the work. There were no posters with curricular-based content or rewards and sanctions for behaviour or performance. The teacher did not employ material reward schemes. He encouraged the children with their work or he controlled disruptive behaviour through his gaze and speech.

5.23a



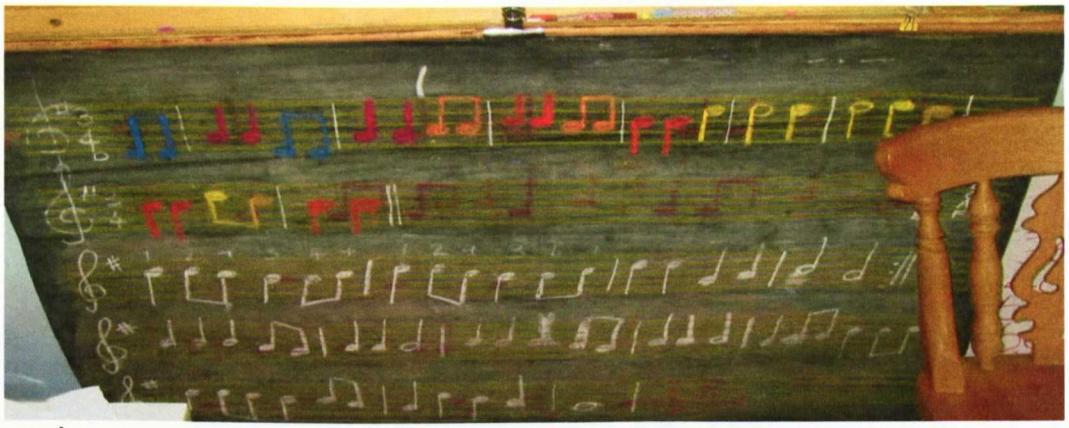
5.23b

5.23c

***Figures 5.23a, b, c Children's* drawings in Bob's classroom (year 4/5)**

In addition to the displays art work, were objects related to themes from the curriculum. The teacher used musical instruments from different cultural origins in the Music lesson. The children were exposed to different stimuli to broaden their knowledge of different sounds and craft work, as part of the pedagogy is governed by rhythm and the art of movement (Figs. 5.24a, b). The curriculum and pedagogy are designed to be in harmony with the developmental stages of children. For this reason, rhythm and movement made learning more accessible and enjoyable to children and included all the children. A small blackboard was used for teaching music, with music notes produced by the teacher in coloured chalk, as emphasis was placed on whole class teaching. There was autonomy in the teacher's choice of colours and instruction for the music lesson.

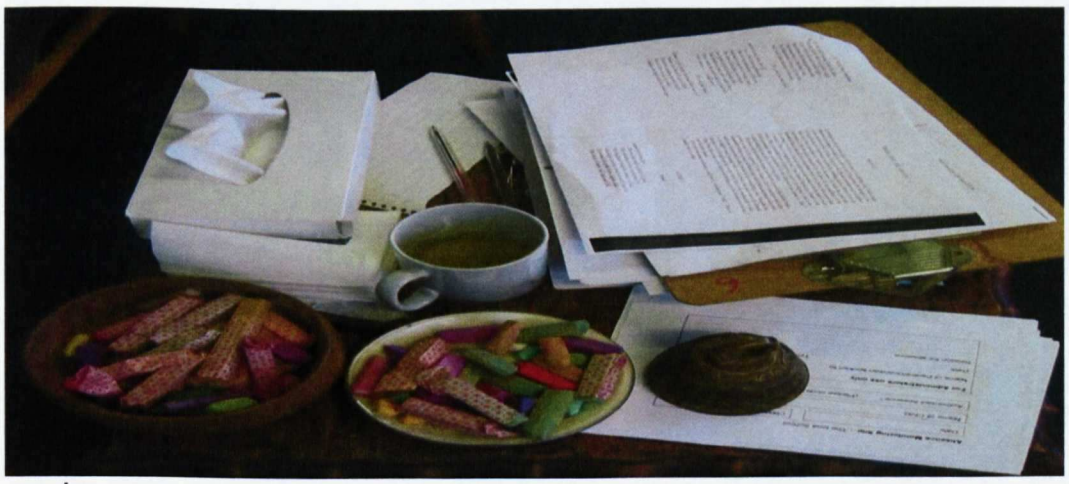
5.24a



5.24b

***Figures 5.24a, b* Music in Bob's classroom (year 4/5)**

5.25a



5.25 b

***Figures 5.25 a, b* Objects in Bob's classroom (year 4/5)**

Several natural things (Figs. 5.25a, b) like a bird's nest, fossils and stones lay on a table at the front of the room, relating to another aspect of Steiner's curriculum engaging children with the principles of natural science. In this school, the curriculum is for developing children's spiritual qualities and not just for earning a

living. The teacher used a table next to the blackboard to place his chalks which illustrated his teaching on the board. For example, one subject was Ancient Greek History. He drew the ancient Athenian temple of the Parthenon and the children produced their own sculptures of the temple. An old bell on the table was used to tell the children about the end of an activity and the transition to a new one.

The spatial arrangement of furniture and the visual displays in Bob's classroom created an environment with multiple stimuli for learning, the meanings of which is discussed in the next section.

5.5.2.3 Bob's classroom as a sign of pedagogy

In this school, it seemed that learning is enshrined both at an individual level, where the child needs to concentrate on himself in order to manage his tasks, and at a collective level, where the child acts with other children to help one another, participates in extra-curricular activities, prepares social events, sings and works on the land. In the year 4/5 classroom, Bob tried to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each child as his knowledge developed throughout the five consecutive academic years of his interaction with them. (The children keep the same teacher for five years, not changing teachers yearly as happens in state schools.) This practice gives the teacher autonomy in his individual professional judgement when assessing the children's progress. Intimate pedagogic relationships between teacher and students develop as he observes the children's advance through different developmental stages. He incorporated in his teaching the ideas of Steiner while using his own ideas about the best way for knowledge to be transmitted.

The children's seating was arranged by the teacher in single or paired tables in three lines with small distances between them. This spatial organisation did not facilitate the children's collaboration as the tables were not grouped like the classrooms in Sunny Hill and the Panoptical Heights. Bob motivated the children to work either individually or in groups. Even in the case of individual work, Bob encouraged those children that had finished their work to sit next to others and help them. As he explained,

> Bob: Children do not feel alone when they struggle for something they do not know or they do not understand. (13/7/10)

This promotes the socialisation and intellectual development of children as they learn with a more *capable peer*.

> It is what we call the zone of proximal development. It is the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978:86).

The flow of children's communication was constrained as he preferred the children to concentrate on their tasks rather than talk to each other, even when they collaborated in small groups. Placing some students in single desks facilitated the teacher's management of behaviour and performance. Single desks were not set apart but in the rows of the other desks. This arrangement does not single out children as in Cas' classroom.

Bob's physical position at the front of the room during his teaching represented his authority to transmit knowledge. However, knowledge was constructed through his interaction with the children. He moved around the desks and sat next to children when they needed help, which reduced his authority. Bob motivated the children to share teaching with him. He invited children to the board and gave them the opportunity to become active agents in the construction and distribution of knowledge.

5.5.2.4 Verbal communication

An example from his lesson about division in arithmetic is presented in Excerpt 5.4

Excerpt 5.4 **Mixed ability lesson (year 4, 5) Bob's classroom (29/6/10)**

Bob:	*Who would like to try the exercise on the board? Nathan would you like to try?*
Nathan:	*Ok...*
Bob:	*Alright...; is there anything you would like to revise?*
Nathan:	*Well...*
Bob:	*OK. Take your time and think about it.*
Nathan:	*I think...it's... 2.9...4*
Bob:	*That's better now... because we divide 250 by 85... Thank you, Nathan. Ok, now... What do you think about this exercise? Tim? Come to the board, please. Now you take over.*
Tim:	*It's...*
Bob:	*Now you are the teacher and should explain to the other children why you solve the exercise the way you do. You should help your students understand.*

Bob encouraged the children to find the solution to the exercise by inviting them to write on the board and become active agents in the construction and distribution of knowledge. There was a shift from teacher-centred to student-centred approaches in teaching style. In this way, the activity became inclusive and attracted the children's interest as their peers took on the role of the teacher. The teacher maintained a less authoritative position and was flexible in changing his teaching style. This *progressive* pedagogic practice could be seen as part of a liberal educational environment (Bernstein, 1990). Bob instigated the children's equal participation through questions and answers describing a story or finding a solution to a problem. There was an open channel of communication as the children participated in the dialogue. In the process of learning, Bob broke down tasks (for example, Excerpt 5.3, division) into small steps to help the children acquire

knowledge and to monitor and evaluate their progress. The selection, sequence and pace of activities were regulated by him. He selected activities which alternated between concentration and relaxation to reduce fatigue and boredom. The sequence of working was set by Bob, so the children produced their drawings, following the set steps. Bob allocated three to four weeks to complete work. The children chose the colours and gave their own personal expression in the wall display pictures. Their organisation was based on the teacher's choice. The teacher seemed to dominate some of the criteria for the production of work, but, the children's drawings dominated the classroom wall space, giving them the feeling it was their space. Part of this ownership also related to the distribution of small tasks to reinforce students' active involvement and interactions with peers. For example, Bob asked children to distribute notebooks or atlases or carry the clay or coloured chalks in the classroom.

On the whole, Bob's classroom seemed to be an open learning environment within which children possessed their own space to create their work. The Steiner pedagogy is based on the spiritual needs of children, which seemed to be reflected in the simplicity of the layout and the relatively few displays or objects in the classroom. Those that were there were connected to themes of Steiner's curriculum, integrating knowledge from various cultural, religious and historical backgrounds. Bob's actions highlighted his commitment to supporting each child's emotional and spiritual needs. This is the basis for the growth of the intimate pedagogic relationships between the teacher and children in Steiner's Philosophy.

The summary of the multimodal description of Bob's classroom is presented below.

Table 5.3 **Features of Bob's classroom**

Nova Spectrum School Features	**Bob's year 4/5 classroom**
Teacher's perspective	Teacher supported children in activities to stimulate their emotional and spiritual growth. The students were participated in individual and group tasks for developing their individual and social skills.
Classroom layout	The students were sitting at single desks. However, he encouraged children who had finished their work to sit next to peers and help them.
The visual layout of displays	There was no material representation of social order. The students' art works were displayed.
Classroom as a sign of pedagogy	He expressed his authority less as he shared teaching with his students. He encouraged children to participate in dialogues with him as they worked on tasks. Children took on responsibilities for managing specific tasks in the classroom.
The verbal communication between the teacher and the students	Social relations between the children and teacher were more symmetrical as they both took part in the construction and distribution of knowledge.

In the next section presents some general comments concerning the multimodal analysis of the classrooms of the three schools.

5.6 Summary of the influence of classroom layout and displays on pedagogy and hence the positioning of the children

This section has shown how the classroom layout and visual displays are organised and the kind of meanings they mediate in relation to teachers, students and type of pedagogy. The multimodal signs of a pedagogic typology seem to rely on the teacher's philosophy of teaching and learning, school policies, which may highlight the need for public recognition and funding allocation and government-based policies of high-stakes tests and highly specified National Curriculum. The analysis of multimodal signs in each classroom showed how pedagogic typologies are understood and explained, how these typologies position children in the learning environment. An understanding of this can help teachers change the learning environment in ways that broaden the knowledge-base of children and socialise them into inclusive activities.

In the next section, I discuss how the pedagogic typologies of each of the classrooms in my study serve to position the children with special educational needs in the learning environment, emphasising the modes through which their position and identification are actualised.

CHAPTER 5
DATA ANALYSIS-PART 2

5.7 The multimodal construction of ability in the classroom
5.7.1 Introduction

The pedagogical, political and ideological debate surrounds differentiation according to ability. The idea of different teaching for children with SEN became central to integration and inclusion. There has been a continuous debate about the effects of special provision for SEN on the emotional, academic and social well being of children. Provision for SEN entails withdrawal of children for support and in-lesson support. It could be argued that several state schools in England tend to promote individual work for SEN pupils, as they claim it is effective in meeting the individual needs of the children. In the classrooms, it is realised through alternative teaching and learning resources rather than as a principle. Due to government pressure, the National Tests and need to monitor, evaluate and revise the learning objectives for each pupil, children with SEN are positioned differentially in relation to these factors. As a school's position in the league tables is influenced by examination outcomes, it is interesting to see what kind of pedagogy is produced for children with SEN and how this affects the children with SEN and their peers.

The data from this study showed that in all three schools, variations in pedagogy related to the level of ability. In two of the four classrooms, these variations were more visible at a structural level, i.e. seating arrangements, individualised work, special resources, support by a special teacher, and communication through body posture, gaze, gesture and talk. Differentiation of children by ability and their positioning in high and low ability groups constructs a different kind of pedagogy for the children with SEN compared to their peers in higher ability groups.

The teachers at Sunny Hill and Panoptical Heights believed that different teaching based on ability, supports the children's individual needs and motivates them to work harder for transition to a higher ability group. Bam, teaching year 6 in Sunny Hill explained.

> Bam: We have to make sure that it's at their level so they can succeed. So we differentiate it that way and then with the top end of the classroom with those working at a higher level, then we give them extra challenges, then we give them different texts or different tasks to do. (2.4.10)

Cas, year 5 teacher at Panoptical Heights said:

> Cas: You've got those children that are on your less able table, they are aspiring to move up. Okay, they've got a lot harder task to do to move up but they are still aspiring to move up. (6.4.10)

The effects of differentiation by ability on the children's well-being are discussed later in Chapter 6. Section 5.8 explores how pedagogy is constructed in different ways for children placed in different ability groups.

5.8 Ability groupings and pedagogy: A comparative multimodal description of four classes

I examine the meanings of the spatial arrangements of each classroom for the children with SEN and in the modes of interaction through the body posture, gesture and talk of teacher and peers as part of the pedagogy for children with SEN. Each school is discussed individually.

5.8.1 Sunny Hill Classroom

In Sunny Hill, the children with SEN are included in the classroom but are streamed for Literacy and Numeracy. They attend School Action or School Action Plus, which monitor the individual progress of the children. They also attend support sessions with the teaching assistant for Literacy and Numeracy and work on tasks corresponding to their levels. Teachers' assessments of academic performance are used to manage the children's individual needs and produce individual educational plans with specific targets for each child. A teaching assistant is present in each classroom to support the children with SEN through the learning process. Special resources are used to access the official curriculum, depending on the needs of the children. Curriculum tasks are based on level of ability in each subject.

How individual needs are realised at classroom level and how the children themselves construct their own positioning in relation to pedagogy and to classification by ability, is explored first in Danny's classroom.

5.8.2 The multimodal construction of ability in Danny's year 4/5 classroom

Observing Danny's classroom, I realised the children were divided into high and low ability groups. The children in low ability groups were classified as belonging to a particular category of need and often statemented as pupils with SEN; they sat at a separate table. It was usually easy to identify the children with SEN by the presence of a teaching assistant next to them. The position of the children with SEN in relation to the seating arrangements of their peers in the classroom is illustrated in Figure 5.26. The red arrows indicate the positions of two children with mild SEN, Harris and Mary.

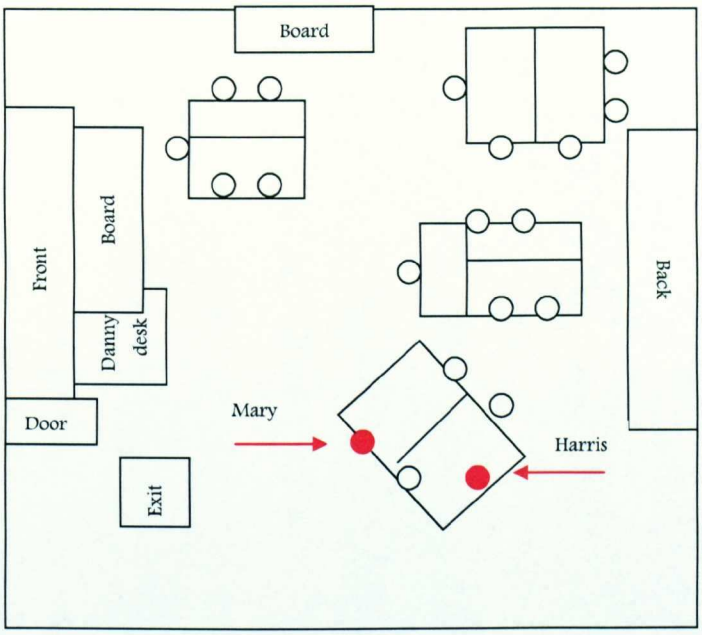


***Figure* 5.26 Sunny Hill: placement of students with SEN in Danny's classroom (year 4/5)**

The position of these children is explored in relation to the position of the teacher, their peers and the objects in the classroom. Mary and Harris sat at a table with children of low ability, as their ability in Literacy and Numeracy do not correspond to the level of their year class. Their table is situated towards the back of the classroom and at a greater distance from the position of the teacher in the front of the board and the other tables. This position restricts the verbal and nonverbal communication of the children in the low ability group with peers in higher ability groups. Harris struggles to see the whiteboard while Mary sits with her back to the board and does not have eye contact with the teacher. Harris sits alone as there is always a teaching assistant next to him at the table. Mary's position as the only girl at the low ability table affects her interaction with other girls. However, this does not seem to affect her cross gender interaction, according to my observations.

The positioning and interactions of the children with SEN with the teacher and the peers shape different realisations of pedagogy for them and relate to their perceptions as learners. As previously discussed, Danny encouraged dialogue in group tasks but he restricted verbal communication between tables. This means that pupils' communication is constrained by the teacher's practice. The children with SEN tend to interact only with peers at the same table, classified as low ability students. The presence of the teaching assistant next to Harris inhibits his communication with the rest of the group and makes his learning more individualised. Danny tended to interact less with the children at the low ability table as the teaching assistant supported them throughout the lessons. His movement is mainly in the space of high ability students. The classification of the children into two ability groups divides the space in the classroom into two areas; one for high ability groups and the other for the low ability group.

Their separation from the others in Literacy and Numeracy lessons - they are taught outside the classroom by the teaching assistant- is another factor which could affect the way SEN students experienced pedagogy and relationships. Peers in higher ability groups work either in groups or individually at the same subjects. As Danny explained,

> Danny: Obviously we do take people with special needs out for literacy and numeracy to get that extra support and it takes away from kind of the social side of the morning part, they are not involved in a large class environment. (5.4.10)

This could be seen as practice which supports individual needs but obstructs the children's socialisation into the expected academic and social competences in the classroom. Emphasis upon the acquisition of special skills is placed in the teaching and learning of children with SEN, as both teacher and the TA set individual targets for each academic year. The children aim to acquire specific skills in Numeracy, Literacy or in other areas of the curriculum depending on their needs. The differentiation of curriculum tasks serves this purpose. It could be argued that the teacher dominates the construction of learning for pupils with SEN, as he determines the ways that special provisions are distributed in his classroom. However, it should be mentioned that the general provision for SEN is guided by government-based policies which influence the organisation of practice at the school level.

For example, Lil, the TA in Danny's classroom explained that the content of the Individual Educational Plans was decided at meetings,

> Lil: We all have to, we attend meetings, so...there'll be Mrs. Barton, the SEN teacher, there is the classroom staff, then the parents. So the targets are set between us. (8.4.10)

Danny, with the support of the school, selected the targets for each child and the order in which the targets should be accomplished. However, the pace at which the children with SEN finish their work was decided by the teaching assistant. So, pace differed between the high and low ability groups. Based on these criteria, it seemed that there was strong control over the children's with SEN learning in terms of the selection, sequence and pace of activities, consequently, the pedagogical relationship between the teacher and pupils was asymmetrical.

The children were not positioned as active agents in the construction of their learning. Their autonomy was limited. Only in lessons other than Literacy and Numeracy were they able to interact with mixed ability groups and develop their communicational skills. But even in mixed ability tasks, the children with SEN stayed in the same seats. When the children were involved in group activities, Danny decided the time allowed for the completion of tasks. The criteria for the selection and sequence of work in group activities were - again - set by him.

Overall, it could be argued that in Danny's classroom, the content of the curriculum for the children with SEN was an obstacle to their interactions. Thus, the regulatory framework of the curriculum and the criteria upon which appropriate learning was delivered to the children with SEN was explicit in this classroom. An additional reason for such differentiation could have been the teacher's low expectations of his students,

> Danny: So to be able to, and find and encourage something they love. Cause not everybody is going to go into, going to be having numeracy or literacy. (5.4.10)

Danny claimed that better performance in a different subject promoted inclusivity and equality in learning.

Based on these points, the question under investigation is how the spatial organisation of seating arrangements and the provision of different pedagogical practices for the children with SEN helped them to construct their own positioning in relation to pedagogy and classification by ability and how peers viewed this positioning. The multimodal signs of the children's gaze, gesture and talk are used to analyse these issues next.

5.8.3 Ability groups and communication

I have indicated how the spatial arrangement and the resources used by Danny in his classroom constructed the different positioning of the children with SEN compared to peers in higher ability groups. These arrangements restrained their communication with their peers. This argument is discussed focusing on the meanings which the verbal and the non verbal behaviour of the children suggest.

5.8.3.1 Gesture and gaze in Danny's year 4/5 classroom

The example which follows originates from my field notes after observing Harris positioning, a student with SEN from Danny's class, in relation to other peers. Danny invited the children from his class and the year 6 class to participate in a project where the children had to work in groups to produce and later present an advertisement. Harris expressed through his body posture his resistance and disengagement compared to the openness of his peers in the activity. He kept his distance and did not move or take any action except to look at what others were doing.

► **Field note 5.1**-Harris' interaction with peers in the assembly room (29.4.10)

Harris came in and asked Danny what they were doing. He picked up a chair and tried to find a group to sit with. He looked around. Danny told him to sit with two students in his group. He sat in his chair away from the other children and did not do anything. He took an A4 sheet from the desk and started drawing an ice-cream. He worked alone and put his drawing on his chair away from the other children. He sat close to the desk where pens and pencils are placed.

Harris tried to interact with the children through his gaze but it did not seem to work. He then made the gesture of grabbing a chair, trying to get involved in a group, but no one seemed to welcome him. Other students were in small circles, communicating and collaborating at a distance from the others. Danny tried to interact with Harris and two of his fellow students but he kept his distance and worked alone. He communicated his position by sitting apart from the other children. His positioning regarding the team-oriented task shows resistance while his behaviour towards his peers could be associated with low self esteem, poor interactional skills or shyness. He indicated discomfort in interacting with others, which made them distant and this could have been why other children did not invite him into their games.

The next excerpt shows how Harris functioned emotionally when dealing with teasing from peers in the playground.

► **Field note 5.2**-Harris in the playground (23.3.10)

Harris' classmate threw a small stone at Harris. Harris picked up a bigger stone and held it in his hand. When the other boy saw Harris's stone, he started screaming 'Don't throw the stone'. Harris stared and said nothing. The other boy continued screaming, then one of Harris' classmates, came and told Harris to throw the stone away. Harris did nothing except stare at the boys. The second boy threatened to tell the teacher if he did not throw the stone away. Harris threw the stone away and then the second boy knocked Harris's hat onto the ground with a flick of his hand. Harris became furious and was very angry with him. He started swearing and moving in circles, screaming and moving his hands up and down. The first boy started yelling that Harris was using swear words and told him 'you should not use those words'. Harris kept on walking in circles, still swearing. Then Harris looked at me probably to see my reaction. I did nothing. I just watched. Harris then smiled at me and came up to me looked at me and shrugged his shoulders.

It could be that Harris and the first boy were in a competitive and antagonistic position about who was going to dominate by throwing stones. Harris' gaze and gesture when holding the stone indicated a threatening disposition. When another student intervened and used the authority of the teacher to punish children as a

reference point, Harris dropped back and negotiated. The second boy threw Harris' hat to tease him and Harris reacted aggressively. It seemed that he found it difficult to show his anger to others and he expressed his personal response by gesturing towards himself. When Harris turned his gaze to me, he was probably looking for some reaction. As he did not see any disapproval, he approached me and smiled to verify I was in a neutral position and created a kind of ambiguity by shrugging his shoulders. This attitude could suggest a child who seems immature and pusillanimous in defending himself and dominating. Throughout my observations, Harris was not an active or engaged participant in games with his peers in the playground. He preferred to play with younger children from years 2 and 3; this perhaps made him feel secure and responsible for the protection of younger children in the playground.

The positioning of peers towards the ways pedagogy is constructed for the children with SEN is further explored in talk.

5.8.3.2 The pupils talk

In the following conversation coming from the focus group of boys and girls without SEN in Danny's classroom, the children talked about their peers with special educational needs and the subjects they struggle with. The children thought their peers struggled with Maths and English because they attended both lessons outside the classroom in a separate group of students with special educational needs. Also reflected in their voices is their awareness of the hierarchical system which classified the children at different levels.

Excerpt 5.5 **Students without SEN in Danny's classroom (year 4/ 5) (27.4.10)**

Franklin:	*well he doesn't come to ordinary class...*	*1*
Domino:	*he comes here*	
Elias:	*with some people that are younger than him and they do some easier work*	
Hattie:	*he has special help*	*5.*
Domino:	*like work here and like help...*	
Franklin:	*with his work*	
Hattie:	*like special help and he does some quite easy work like Year 1 or 2's would do*	

The children used *ordinary (1), easier* (4) *special* (5) *easy* (8) *Year 1 or 2's (8)* when they tried to position their peer within specific ability categories and discussed how easy work and special help contributed to another student's progress.

How students with SEN became conscious of their positioning in low ability groups is revealed in the following dialogue between children in year 4/5 and 6. These comments were taken from the tape scripts of focus group interviews with students with and without SEN from Danny's and Bam's classes.

Excerpt 5.6 **Students with SEN (year 4/5 and 6) (29.4.10)**

Harris:	*No. Like we can when he says 'you can sit anywhere you want' but she* picks the morning places and stuff like that.*	1.
Barry:	*Because all the time she wants us to sit with some people that will help, that are intelligent, so she puts like the clever people with the not so clever people so...*	5.
Mary:	*They're probably the people you're not going to actually work with but...*	

**she: Bam*

Their interactions with peers seemed to affect their perceptions of their academic ability. Barry communicated his low expectations as he separated himself from *intelligent (4)* students. He made a contrast between two ability categories (*clever...not so clever*) indicating his position in the latter group. Mary's response seems to convey a verbal message of discouragement for interacting with her peers (*the people you're not going to actually work with, 6*) as being in a low ability group affected her level of performance and socialisation. Harris' response about the seating arrangements might express dissatisfaction as he uses *but* (1.) to make a contrast between what they could do and what really happens. Barry stressed the teacher's practice of arranging seating on ability level. As the teachers revealed in their interviews, differentiation according to ability is effective for the children's learning. However, it is important to emphasise that this practice makes differentiation on ability stronger.

Differentiation and ability grouping extends the children's capacity to develop a picture of themselves. It could be argued that any repeated and frequent academic failures could generate low expectations about their capabilities and self perceptions. Excerpt 5.7 is from the same group of students with SEN.

Excerpt 5.7 **Students with SEN (year 4/5, 6) (29.4.10)**

Barry:	*Because I'm rubbish at literacy because I can't... because my brain isn't very good at literacy, but I'm okay with Maths. It's just the signs... the signs in the literacy I'm rubbish at, I have trouble with.*	
Zen:	*I feel okay. It's just that... sometimes when you have learning difficulties; you wish that you were never born with them, never born with it.*	5.
Harris:	*I didn't know that I had dyslexia until I moved here. I didn't know I had a problem until my mum told me a week ago.*	

One could be forgiven for thinking these children were talking about a very serious *illness*. For example, Zen was wracked by self-criticism about his poor performance and has low self-esteem, as evidenced in line 5. Harris introduced another factor that could determine his sense of self-worth, the role of parents. Parents and the school are considered two significant factors in children's lives (Erikson, 1964) and can affect whether children have high, realistic or low expectations in a variety of social situations.

The children receiving special provision were dissatisfied with and rejected their labelling. The following conversation involved children with SEN from years 4, 5 and 6.

Excerpt 5.8 **Students with SEN (year 4/5, 6) (29.4.10)**

Mary:	*Because we all have kind of issues, like I'm dyslexic, Sat's got... I don't know what it's called, but all of us have got a problem.*
Barry:	*So we go like into this group, me and Zen don't go into this group like... and we do like part Maths.*
Harris:	*I'm an ace at Maths.*
Mary:	*Where you went with Lisa and Bill and everyone yesterday. That's where we usually go. I go out with a lady called Miss Killford. We all have the same teachers but like because we have to go out we sometimes have different teachers to other pupils, because people with issues have different teachers.*
Researcher:	*I see, okay.*
Mary:	*Because I go out with the woman who helps people with problems, when everyone in my class has got a problem.*

Mary categorised herself as belonging to a group problems (*line 2)* or issues (line 19). Her resistance to labelling and identification as a student with SEN appears in line 9, '*everyone in my class has got a problem*'. Children experience learning in ways different to the approaches developed for higher ability groups. It seems that the children had already incorporated the views of the prevailing culture of being *a problem* and that '*people with issues have different teachers*' (10). However, Harris is '*an ace at Maths*', so may have also acquired this positive labelling from within the same culture of differentiation.

In the following section, I look at how ability is realised in the year 6 classroom.

5.8.4The multimodal construction of ability in Bam's year 6 classroom

In Bam's classroom, the children with SEN were classified in low ability groups. As in Danny's classroom, the seating arrangements were according to high and low levels of ability. There were three children with SEN who sat apart. Zen, who has global developmental delay, sat most of the time alone or with the TA. Barry was epileptic and sat next to his friend. Larry had autistic syndrome and sat with another peer. The way the three children were positioned in relation to the seating of their peers can be seen in Figure 5.27. The red arrows indicate the positions of - Zen, Barry and Larry.

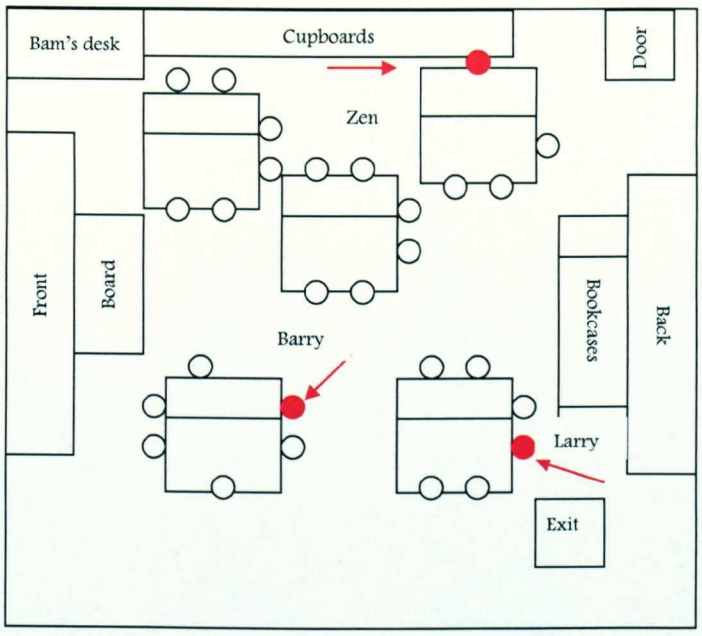


***Figure* 5.27 Sunny Hill: placement of the students with SEN in Bam's classroom (year 6)**

The position of the children is discussed in relation to the teacher's and peers' positions and in relation to the furniture in the classroom. Zen was placed at a table at the back of the classroom, creating distance between him and the teacher and the board. He was also at a distance from his peers at the same table and from the rest of the tables, which discouraged eye contact with the teacher. If Bam stood next to her desk, he had to twist his body round to see her. This could have encouraged Zen to disengage from teaching and learning. Larry sat at the back of the classroom at a different table on the opposite side of the room to Zen. His place next to the wall and near the exit door isolated him and created distance from the position of the teacher at the corner of the room. Moreover, it was difficult for him to see the board as other children were in front. Again this could disengage Larry from what happens at the front of the classroom. Barry sat at a table at the front of the room close to the board but at some distance from Bam's desk. Larry had a peer to his left but none on his right. The positions of Barry, Larry and Zen facilitated Bam's monitoring of their behaviour.

Bam encouraged individual work. The communication of the children at their tables was constrained by the teacher's practice. The teaching assistant next to Zen isolated him from the rest of the group. Bam tended to interact with the children with SEN mostly for behavioural management. The TA supported the children with SEN in all subjects. While the classroom space was not separated into ability areas as in Danny's classroom, the presence of the TA next to these children made their needs more visible.

In this school there is streaming for the children with SEN. In Bam's class, the three boys with SEN studied the main core subjects of English and Mathematics outside the classroom. In Science lessons, they stayed with the class but worked on different worksheets with the TA. Teaching some school subjects separately to children with SEN is a factor which influences their pedagogy and social relations.

The children with SEN worked with IEPs, which set specific targets for acquiring special skills depending on level of need and ability. Bam managed the ways knowledge was distributed to pupils with SEN. She selected the content of tasks that corresponded to their level of ability. The sequence of activities throughout the day relied again on the teacher. Bam determined the time allocated for tasks to be finished either in groups or individually. In contrast to Danny's classroom, the teaching assistant followed the same time frame as Bam when she worked with the children with SEN; she sometimes even finished most of the work herself. This meant she emphasised the completion of tasks, not the children's learning, which restricted their progress. These practices illustrate the teachers' control over the criteria regulating activities for the children with SEN. Consequently, the social relations between the children and teacher were hierarchical. The children had limited freedom over how their learning was actualised, making them passive learners.

It could be argued that the practices which mediated the content of the curriculum for the children with SEN in Bam's classroom highlighted the differences between the children with high ability and the children with low ability. These same practices acted as barriers to interaction between the children. Bam's low expectations about the children's performance could be a factor that affected her positioning to SEN.

Bam stressed the importance of offering a different curriculum for high ability children as attention and interest have shifted to achievement in the National Tests.

> Bam: Well, obviously, it's quite hard because by the time they get to year 6 of course you really have got the spectrum of ability in there really. So with the very special needs for maths and English we withdraw them from the classroom and they work in a small group working at their level. Obviously, they just couldn't access the curriculum at the level that the year 6's is working at really. (2.4.10)

What kind of position do the children with SEN take in Bam's classroom concerning their classification as children with needs? The multiple meanings derived from gaze, gesture and talk are analysed next.

5.8.5 Ability groups and communication

5.8.5.1 Gesture and gaze in Bam's year 6 classroom

I found it enlightening to observe how Zen and Harris, two boys with SEN from years 4,/5 and 6 whom I was observing, communicated their position to others through their body posture, gaze and gesture. It was interesting to see how they identified themselves and were identified by peers in the same group.

- **Field note 5.3**-Zen's interaction with peers in the assembly room (29.4.2010)

Zen sat alone so Danny sat next to him and asked if his name was Zen. He then told him to work with his group and told the other students to let him in. A boy and a girl from the group showed him a sketch and Zen nodded his head up and down, probably to show he understood. The two students continued their conversation and Zen stayed apart. He did not participate in the group and did not look very happy because he moved his chair slowly at the back trying to get out of the circle.

That day the class teacher had decided to place children from years 4, 5 and year 6 in the assembly room so they could collaborate on a project and present their ideas later in the day. I was not close enough to hear the children's conversations but I was intrigued by the richness of information provided by the non-verbal cues and the vividness of the messages they conveyed.

Zen was given the chance to work with other children but he chose isolation. Danny, the year 4/5 teacher, encouraged Zen to get involved in his group and asked the students to let him in. Zen remained uninvolved, slowly dragging his chair backwards, leaving the circle. He probably wanted to sit outside the circle. Zen showed through the backward movement with his chair that he chose not to get involved in a group-orientated task. He communicated his choice by placing his chair outside the circle and at a distance. His body posture and gesture could imply poor social interactional skills, either from his poor self esteem or because he was shy and found it awkward to involve himself in group tasks. Moreover, his withdrawn behaviour might suggest his predisposition to resist identification as a student with SEN or it could be that he was not used to group tasks as his teacher, Bam in year 6, preferred students to work individually.

Zen showed the same discomfort in the playground when he tried to join a football game with his peers. Zen showed interest in being involved in the football game but something stopped him from kicking the ball and becoming part of the team. His discomfort about interacting with others made him distant.

► **Field note 5.4**-Zen in the playground (a) (11.2.10)

Now Zen took off his glasses and joined the game. He moved around the others but did not run and did not kick the ball. He just stared and kept his hands in the pockets of his trousers. Nobody passed him the ball. He stayed inside the field and just watched the ball. He turned his head to the right and left depending on who kicked the ball. Then he went back to the fence and stayed there with his hands in his trouser pockets watching the game.

I found it very enlightening how Zen, one of the boys with SEN in Bam's classroom whom I was observing, communicated his position to his peers through his body posture, gaze and gesture in another football game in the playground (Fieldnote, 5.5).

► **Field note 5.5**-Zen in the playground (b) (11.3.10)

Zen approached his peers playing football. He moved around the others but did not run or kick the ball. He just stared and kept his hands in his pockets. Nobody passed him the ball. He remained in the circle watching the ball. He turned his head from side to side. He stood with his back to the fence, his hands in his pockets. He stared at the children.

Zen showed on each occasion he wanted to be involved in the activity but something prevented him from kicking the ball. The reason might have been his poor interactional skills or poor football skills. His discomfort when interacting with others made him distant and this might why the other children did not to invite him into their games. In all my observations, Zen sat with his back to the fence, hands in his pockets staring at his peers playing football. His loneliness could also be part of how his peers see him. His peers were serious about the game and did not invite him to join in; they paid no attention to him. There was no sign of eye contact between the children, indicating detachment. Peers play a significant role in the construction of self esteem and social standing.

5.8.5.2 The pupils talk

The children without SEN from year 6 explain in their focus group how they know that some peers have SEN.

Excerpt 5.9 **Students without SEN in Bam's classroom (year 6) (4.5.10)**

Tom:	*When we do our stuff in that classroom and where we are sitting now is Mrs. Riley's area and Mrs. Riley is like a special needs person.*
Lisa:	*Well, she takes out the kids that struggle.*
Stephen:	*She takes a certain number of people and works with them at their level in the morning.*
Lisa:	*And then in the afternoon they come into our classroom.*
Marcus:	*In the afternoon they come in and do stuff with us, like topics and stuff because they're probably a bit easier for them.*

5

The following phrases summarise the content: *Mrs. Riley's area (2), kids that struggle (3), at their level (4),do stuff with us (7), a bit easier for them (8),* showing how aware they were about the ways that pedagogy is shaped for the children with SEN and how they were positioned in relation to this pedagogy. The verbal phrases *takes out (3)* and *come in (7),* convey the beginning and end of the process of segregation from the rest of the children, and refer to separation and then inclusion. The children refer to their peers as *the kids (3)* and *number of people* (4) as they communicate dissociation from this ability group. Here, *our (6) us* (7) and *they (7)* underline the children's classification into two ability groupings. As Bam, their teacher, said in her interview (date:2.4.10) *'...the children know, don't they; the children are acute, they understand'*, in response to questioning about how the children know there are peers with SEN in their classroom.

The practices of the special provision to children with SEN could be intimately bound up with the perceptions and low expectations of their peers' performance.

Excerpt 5.10 **Students without SEN (year 6) (4.5.10)**

Lisa:	*Mary, she got one of those ruler things when she reads and she told us.*
Tom:	*And when you hear her read, you know so like.*
Lisa:	*She says words like wrong.*

It could be argued that the same resource that facilitated the reading of Mary, affected her peer perceptions about her reading problem and their expectation to identify mistakes in her reading.

In the following conversation from year 6, it is interesting to see how aspects of the identity of children with special educational needs are negotiated within the collaborative reflections of peers.

Excerpt 5.11 **Students without SEN (year 6) (4.5.10)**

Tom:	*But we still accept them as people in our class and we talk to them and everything.*
Lisa:	*Yes; you don't like single them out because they're already out and that because they've got special needs. But we don't want to make them feel that way because it's not really fair on them.*
Stephen:	*They just feel part of the class really.*
Lisa:	*They are all part of the class, it's just they've got learning disabilities and they're different.*
Tom:	*And there's nothing wrong with that because everyone's different.*
Lisa:	*Everyone is different.*

The children elaborated on each other's ideas of how included their peers with special educational needs are in their classroom. Lisa explained how they are positioned: *got learning disabilities and they're different* (7). They collaboratively explain that *everyone is different* (9) and that they *accept them as people...and talk to them* (1) *because they're already out (3), it's not really fair on them* (5). The children

have developed a moral positioning (*fair, 5*) and social knowledge about accepting diversity and reflect on how school practices single out peers because of their special needs. However, they seemed to accept their labelling as *different* (8) but counterbalance the picture with *there's nothing wrong with that (9).*

The children collaboratively built their own meaning-making about ways in which they experience their interaction with peers.

Excerpt 5.12 **Students without SEN (year 6) (4.5.10)**

Tom:	*I think they're quite nice.*	
Lisa:	*Yes they are, they're not like aggressive with their special needs, they are quite fun aren't they?*	
Marcus:	*Yes they are...*	
Tom:	*Yes because Barry sometimes comes up with some jokes.*	5
Lisa:	*Yes he's got like a really good imagination and he's good at making things up and stuff. He likes drawing and crafts and stuff.*	
Stephen:	*Zen's a bit accident prone a little bit isn't he?*	
Lisa:	*Because he's always knocking stuff off if there's stuff to be knocked down, so that's funny in a way but he finds it funny too.*	10
Stephen:	*He is quite nice Zen.*	
Lisa:	*He's brilliant, he's really smiley. You rarely ever see Zen without a smile.*	
Marcus:	*He's quite a happy person.*	
Stephen:	*Barry quite likes me so he quite likes to talk to me, so I talk to him.*	
Lisa:	*I do talk to him. Actually Barry just likes anyone that will talk to him really.*	15
Tom:	*Yes, we are actually quite good friends with Barry.*	
Lisa:	*Anyone that talks to him he just sort of counts them as a friend.*	
Tom:	*And we play with him don't we?*	
Lisa:	*Yes we play with him. Like if looks over we get him to chase us and he quite likes it. He does like chasing us.*	21

In the above excerpt, they expanded on each other's utterances about two of their peers with SEN and added to each other's comments about how they evaluate personality, strengths and weaknesses. Lisa spoke supportively about the positive side of peers with SEN: *they're not like aggressive with their special needs, they are quite fun, aren't they? (2-3)*, although she negotiated her evaluation as she used two contradictory terms -*aggressive/fun* - while the rest of the children started conversing on that basis. Stephen took the initiative in commenting on a weakness of Zen -*accident prone* (*8*). Lisa justified Stephen's comment by explaining why Zen was accident prone (*9-10*) and gave her own interpretation of his comment. Lisa again took the lead -*that's funny in a way* (*10*) - and focused the conversation again on the *funny* side of Zen's personality. The other children elaborated on Lisa's comment with similar, jointly-produced comments - *nice (Tom,1) brilliant, smiley (Lisa, 12) and happy* (Marcus, *13*) while Stephen who was trying to shift the talk to Zen's accident proneness tries again to hold the conversation with a new comment - *Barry quite likes me* (*14*).

A different kind of gender positioning in the communication between the girl and boys seemed to develop. There is a sense of dominance in Stephen's process of communication when he tried to change the subject of the conversation and a conflict emerged when Lisa responded *Actually Barry just likes anyone* (15). Lisa's comment might suggest an egalitarian positioning in communication as she expressed clearly her views and verbally competed with the boys throughout the conversation. At the end, when Tom led the conversation with a question - *And we play with him, don't we?* (19) - Lisa seemed to develop a collaborative stance in the dialogue where she repeated and validated Tom's words (20), however, in an awkward manner (21).

It seems that talk among these children had developed in an emotive and evaluative form. They sympathised with the different positioning of their peers and developed moral attitudes to this disparity. From this position, the children had conceptualised the identity of their peers with SEN as it emerged through practices.

The teachers' voices were also reproduced in the children's talk when evaluating the performance of their peers with special educational needs in the classroom, as illustrated in Excerpt 5.13

***Excerpt 5.13* Students without SEN (year 6) (4.5.10)**

Tom:	*In the afternoon they come in and do stuff with us, like topics and stuff because they're probably a bit easier for them.*
Lisa:	*Yes.*
Stephen:	*I think it's like the maths and English level that they sort of struggle on and the whole reading and writing prospect.*
Marcus:	*Barry is quite a good reader.*
Lisa:	*Yes he likes reading.*
Stephen:	*And he's quite a good story teller as well because he makes a lot of comics and things.*
Lisa:	*Yes he likes comics and stuff.*
Tom:	*He isn't bad at English it's just the maths I think he struggles with.*
Lisa:	*Yes, but in a way they struggle, but in a way they don't because they're not struggling at their level, they're struggling at year 6 level. But there's only one person in there, well two, who have got something wrong with them. Because Jo has got epilepsy and Katie has got dyslexia, so I think we're a pretty good class really.*
Tom:	*Yes. I think really, I think the ideal that Miss Bam would want is everybody would work hard and behave. I think that would be like a perfect lesson to her.*
Lisa:	*Yes, but it doesn't really happen like that.*

In this conversation, boys and girls talked about their peers with SEN and the subjects that they struggled with. The children thought their peers struggled with Maths and English because they had separate lessons outside the classroom in a

group of students with special educational needs. Also reflected in their voices is acceptance of the hierarchical system of placing children at different levels.

The conventions of *social ordering* (Foucault, 1979) in this classroom, had become part of the children's evaluations by using the institutions labels of epilepsy *(16)* and *dyslexia* (17). On the other hand, the children felt the need in the above conversation to talk about the weaknesses of their peer, Barry, while emphasising his strengths in reading, storytelling and comic design. While the children's viewpoints and relationships may be influenced by the principles of the institutional system, their interpretative framework could also change if they talked to different audiences. The children may internalise the evaluative framework of adults when they address a figure of authority - teacher, researcher. The children in their informal talk could express different predispositions when evaluating their peers.

How a child with SEN's identity was negotiated within the conversation of these children emerged through the different perspectives and interpretations that developed in the conversation. In Excerpt 5.10, the children described how they see Barry and Zen, two of their peers with SEN and established their own evaluations about the kind of relationships they had with them.

In the next conversation, Barry, a child with special educational needs in year 6 in Sunny Hill School, identified himself through his interaction with of one of his classmates, Lisa. The interesting point is that Lisa participated in the previous conversation, expressing how she evaluated the behaviour of Barry and her interaction with him, pointing out the positive side of his personality. However, in the next conversation, Barry articulated a different viewpoint about his interaction with Lisa and explained how he felt identified by her through her comments.

***Excerpt 5.14* Students with SEN (year 4/5, 6) (29.4.10)**

Barry:	*Yeah Lisa says some bad stuff to me.*	
Mary:	*There's Harry, Louis.*	
I*:	*Just pass it please. Barry, tell me about it.*	
Barry:	*Lisa, oh she's in our same class, Lisa. She's a bit of a...*	
Mary:	*She's crazy... yeah, but you're friends with her.*	5
Barry:	*No I'm not. She's friends with Gregory, but not me.*	
I:	*In your classroom you said, okay, and..?*	
Mary:	*You interviewed her yesterday.*	
I:	*Oh right, yes.*	
Barry:	*Yeah, she's a bossy old cow.*	10
Zen:	*That's your opinion Barry.*	
I:	*What was the reason for making you feel as you did? Barry?*	
Barry:	*Well she calls my art stupid. Well she calls my art... on the computer, stupid, which I doodled. I'm very good at art. I make a design and deadly whiff.*	15
I:	*What did you tell? How did you respond?*	
Barry:	*What was that again?*	
I:	*How did you respond to that?*	

Barry:	*I just go... because she can be a bit of a... because her Art's a bit... a bit stupid. She keeps on drawing stupid...she keeps on going on the computer doing stupid pigs and saying I'm the pig.*
I:	*Why do you think this happens?*
Harris:	*There's a ladybird on the camera.*
Barry:	*Because Mary doesn't like me much because I'm friends with Gregory and she wants to ruin my life because I'm a bit of a gaga.*
Mary:	*That isn't right. She just wants to have Gregory to herself.*
Barry:	*That's girls... No offence Mary.*
Mary:	*Offence taken.*
I:	*How does it make you feel?*
Barry:	*Fairly surprised and sad... surprised and sad.*

**Interviewer*

Barry seems to challenge his positioning in this conversation as he defends himself against Lisa calling his art *stupid (13), and* him a *pig (21)* and withstands Lisa's criticisms about his art skills. He presents himself as morally justified in referring to her as a *bossy old cow* (10) and making caustic generalisations - *That's girls* (26) which could annoy Mary. His last comment pertains to how he feels about his interaction with Lisa - *Surprised and sad (30)* - is a kind of negotiation between how he sees himself and how Lisa identifies him. In this excerpt, Mary seems to express a collaborative position in the communication - *She's crazy... yeah* (5) - which later on develops into a conflictual comment and provides an egalitarian stance to Barry's cliché -*That's girls* (27) - with her cynical comment *Offence taken* (28). Zen tends to maintain a combative positioning in the dialogue as he reminds Barry that he does not share the view of Lisa. Harris seems to keep his distance from the topic, perhaps because he does not belong to the same class and might not be familiar with the content of the conversation, or because he finds it awkward to comment on someone else's problem.

An important dimension of children's socialisation and of their emerging perception of self was how they conveyed their own voices and positions in their conversational space when there was no interference from an adult, as there had been in interviews like Excerpt 5.14, where the children responded to my questions.

The next conversation between a girl and three boys from year 6 illustrates this. Despite being in the minority, the girl shows a dominant and competitive style of speech in her interaction with the boys, suggesting that personality can play a big role in determining who tends to hold the conversational floor.

***Excerpt 5.15* Students without SEN (year 6) (4.5.10)**

Lisa:	*I think it's good because they're being assessed on their special needs. Because I've got a friend who's dyslexic and she's been dyslexic like from year 2 or something. And they've only noticed it now and she's been struggling and no one helped her; no one has helped her at all until Mr. Graham came.*
Tom:	*Yes and he's a lovely teacher.*

Lisa:	*And then Mr Graham has helped her but now Mr Graham is leaving and Mrs Bolding won't help her. So I think it's good that these people get extra help and, because they need it. They've got a better chance in life because they've had it I think.*	10
Stephen:	*And they'll also be ready for things to come like secondary school and stuff.*	
Lisa:	*And university.*	
Stephen:	*Yes... if they want to go.*	
Lisa:	*If they want to go.*	15
Stephen:	*I think it is very, I think it is quite important and it's nice to see them getting on really as well.*	
Lisa:	*Yes getting on with their life, not worrying over their special need and that.*	
Stephen:	*Yes it's quite nice because I think it's pretty good that they can work at their level as well which helps because...*	21

In this conversation, the children shared their views on the effectiveness of the support that their peers with special educational needs receive. The multiple perspectives in this dialogue suggest an empathic response to the needs of peers with SEN, which help to develop social knowledge about the benefits of special support. Lisa tends to dominate and becomes verbally competitive and challenges Stephen's comment - *And they'll also be ready for things to come like secondary school and stuff* (11) - with her comment *and university* (13). Stephen maintains the conflict in the conversation by challenging Lisa's comment *Yes... if they want to go* (14) and then Lisa reverts to a collaborative style as she repeats and rephrases Stephen's comments *If they want to go (14) and Yes getting on with their life, not worrying over their special need and that* (18).

5.8.6 Sunny Hill Classes Overview

Sunny Hill's agenda determined the content of curricular tasks and the academic targets for the children with SEN in each class based on government guidelines for special provision for SEN. Its content was decided between the Head, the class teacher, the teaching assistant, the SEN coordinator and the parents of each child. This suggests open communication between the school staff and the inclusion of parents.

In Danny's year 5 classroom, the children were classified in high and low ability groups. There was asymmetrical positioning of the children in high and low ability groups. The students with SEN sat at a separate table and their interactions with other peers were constrained by the teacher's practice. There was also separation of school subjects for the children with SEN as they attended Literacy and Numeracy outside the classroom. The distribution of IEPs to SEN students targeted the acquisition of specialised skills. The pace of tasks was determined by the TA. There was always a TA in the lessons sitting at the table with the children with SEN. The sequence of tasks was determined by the teacher. The relations with the teacher were hierarchical as his practices determined their positioning and restrained their

freedom. The peers without SEN were aware of the needs and the differentiation of the curriculum for the SEN students.

In Bam's year 6 classroom, the children were classified by ability. The children with SEN sat in mixed ability groups but their positioning isolated them from the teacher and the rest of the class, which affected their interactions. The children with SEN were withdrawn for Literacy and Numeracy sessions with the TA. In Individual Educational Plans the children had to work towards specific targets. The TA provided in lesson support but did not sit all the time next to the students with SEN. The pace and the sequence of tasks were set by the teacher. The positioning of the children with SEN was asymmetrical to their peers as they were not treated the same. Teacher's pedagogy isolated them. Students with SEN resisted their identification and showed isolation and poor self perception both in their verbal and non-verbal interactions with peers. Their peers knew about their needs and how activities were different for SEN children.

The question of the children's positioning is now explored in the case of the Panoptical Heights School.

5.9 Panoptical Heights School

This school has a different range of pupils with SEN. They attend either the School Action or School Action Plus programme. The monitoring and tracking system of the school enables teachers to observe the progress of the children with SEN according to their individual targets throughout each academic year. The school collaborates with external professionals, i.e. special needs teachers, speech therapists and physiotherapists for good quality provision.

At class level, the children with SEN are classified as low ability groups who need the support of a TA during lessons. The content of IEPs (Individualised Education Programmes) for the children with SEN is organised between the teacher and SEN Coordinator. The organisation of practices for the children with SEN is now analysed for Cas' year 5 class.

5.9.1 The multimodal construction of ability in Cas' year 5 class

Cas classified the children by ability. In his interview (date:6.4.10), he used terms like *pecking order/ hierarchy/ top table /low ability* groups;

> Cas: ...the children are very, very astute they are more astute than adults are, and they very, very quickly work out where the pecking order is and the hierarchy. (6.4.10)

Cas has two children with SEN in the classroom. The boy, Sam, has behavioural problems while the girl, Dora, has reading problems. Both children were placed by the teacher in single desks at a distance from the teacher and the others, which signifies the teacher's authority.

The specific positioning of the two children can be seen in *Figure* 5.28 with the help of red arrows.

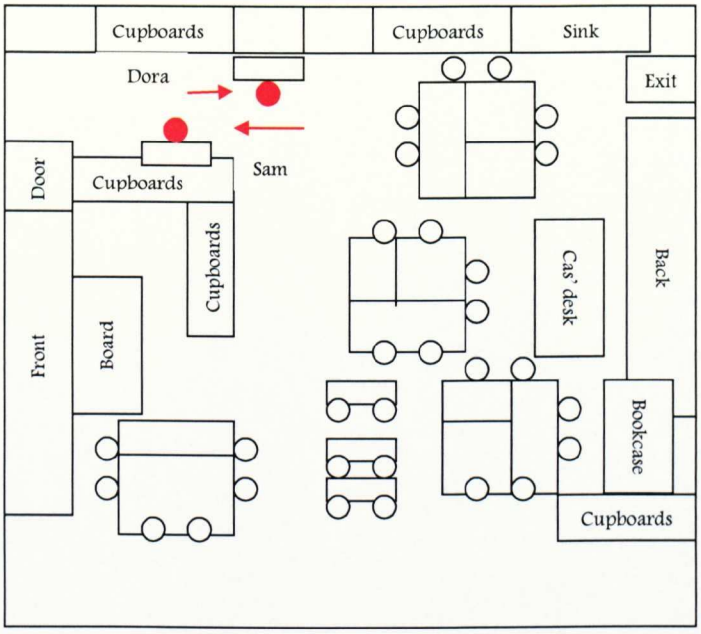


***Figure* 5.28 Panoptical Heights: placement of the students with SEN in Cas' classroom (year 5)**

The position of the children is analysed in relation to the position of the teacher and classmates and the furniture of the classroom. As can be seen in *Figure 5.28*, in the wide space of the classroom, the isolation of the two single desks where the two children with SEN sit is clear. Their movements are restricted to a small space near the door. The specific placing of the two desks created two spaces in the classroom associated with high and low levels of ability. It is difficult for both children, especially Dora, to make eye contact with the teacher, who tends to situate himself in front of the smart board while he teaches. Dora has to twist her body to see the board, making it difficult for her to engage with Cas' teaching.

Sam's desk is located behind the cupboards, which stand as a physical barrier to his line of sight. The two children sat in positions which inhibited any interaction with each other. On the other hand, the position of Cas' desk facilitated the monitoring of Sam, who has behavioural problems. His positioning in relation to the children's desks highlighted his need for supervision rather than his need for academic or emotional support.

In the lessons, Cas prompted either individual or team work. The placing of the two children in single desks limited their socialisation with their peers; therefore, their communication was reduced by the teacher's practice. In team oriented activities, Cas asked the two children to join some others but he decided which group, which reduced their autonomy. The socialisation of the children was also affected by their

separation during Literacy and Numeracy, when the children with SEN attended a support session with the TA outside the classroom.

The difference from Danny's and Bam's classroom was that the TA did not always stay in lessons with the children; she sometimes chose to provide support outside the classroom. Another difference is the hierarchy of tables for Literacy and Numeracy. The children in Cas' classroom in the low ability group moved to tables depending on their ability, which did not happen in Danny's or Bam's classrooms. Cas explained that:

> Cas: depending upon how well they do, I actually move the children around on the tables. I had one child that didn't do very well in maths, and he actually moved off the top table, which was the top table he moved off that table. He was devastated as you would have imagined, but it also did good, because he was then saying to himself right, next assessment I've got to work really hard because I want to be back on that top table. (6.4.10)

The two children worked with the TA on their personal targets at their level for the attainment of special skills. This hindered their progress as they were not challenged by more difficult tasks and became passive learners. The teacher and the SENCo determined the content of the targets but the TA chose the pace of work to reach the targets.

Special provision for children with SEN might be effective for their academic progress but practices, as in this case, can disengage the children from group learning and create extra differentiation. This positioning contributes to different realisations of ability for different children, with implications for the socialisation and inclusion of children with SEN in the social life of the school. The IEP, as a planned intervention for children with special educational needs, helps teachers and teaching assistants check the progress of children working towards specific educational targets. Cas offered another dimension to the overseeing of students' work in relation to individual educational targets. He presented it as part of a process for motivating students with SEN to progress and boost their self esteem.

> Cas: you differentiate in work, checking groupings in the classroom, making sure that it's a happy place to be working... they can see their progress through their own individual targets... but they are progressing and again that's back...on boosting self esteem. (6.4.10)

His practices influence the organisational aspect of the classroom. It became clear that specific seating arrangements facilitated the positioning of children in ability groups. However, in mixed ability activities, the teacher decided upon the sequence and the pace for all the children to accomplish the tasks. Cas communicated his autonomy and authority over the criteria that regulated the activities of the children with SEN. Consequently, pedagogical relations between him and the children

tended to be hierarchical. In general, the spatial arrangement of desks in this classroom along with the practices that supported the SEN children underlined the different realisation of pedagogy for high and low ability groups. In addition, the children's communication was obstructed by such differentiation.

However, Katie, the TA of year 5, offered her own perspective on differentiation according to ability; she believes it makes peers supportive and sensitive to diversity,

> Katie: so they'd be aware that they have a need and perhaps they do need treating differently to help them...they can see that someone say, it was not very able to express themselves about the feelings so also would pick up on it and come and tell you sort of on their behalf...Or if they are not understanding something that's been asked of them they would underpass you know that child... didn't feel able to say anything... they probably alert you to the fact that there is a problem. (6.4.10)

She explained that other children tended to be caring and protective of their peers with SEN. They also *alerted* teachers if they were aware of a problem that their peers had.

Ability groupings and communication realised in verbal and non verbal signs are discussed next.

5.9.2 Ability groups and communication

5.9.2.1 Gesture and gaze in Cas' year 5 class

The next example gives the sequence of actions from my field note observations of a Science lesson and describes the interaction of Sam, the boy with the behavioural difficulties, with one of his peers. The positioning of the two boys and the teacher's position to their behaviour is highlighted.

- **Field note 5.6a**-Sam in the classroom* (24.3.10)

The teacher holds a jar in his hands which contains some water. Sam giggles while he turns his head towards his peer at a group table near his desk. The other boy looks at him, smiles and put his head down. The teacher tells Sam and the boy next to him, to stand up and write their names on the chart list because they are 'very naughty'. Sam put his name at the purple level which is set as a 'reminder of positive behaviour' while the other boy writes his on the blue level which represents 'visual warning'. Then the boys return to their places holding their heads down. Sam looks at his pencil case and at his teacher. The other boy looks straight at the teacher. Sam keeps on looking at the other boy but he does not get any response.

*(*These field notes are reproduced as they were written, in the historic present to emphasise the rapid sequence of actions/events)*

The eye contact and giggling of the two boys suggested a playful situation. The teacher punished the children for their behaviour and as a result, their communication changed. The children seemed embarrassed about writing their names on the chart on the board. The two boys had to stand up in front of the whole class, step up to the board and write their names. When they returned to their desks, there was disengagement as both kept their heads down. Sam tried to re-establish interaction through gaze but the other boy expressed distance through his firm, upright body posture. It seemed the communication of the children was interrupted by the teacher's rules for behaviour management, which in Cas' classroom, are clear. Although Sam had been punished for his behaviour, he attempted to interact again with his peer. The distance between the children's desks and the teacher's positioning regarding disruptive behaviour impeded further interaction.

The next example is taken from my field notes and shows how Sam, a boy with SEN from year 5, interacted with his peers in a task highlighting a different aspect of their communication.

> ▶ **Field note 5.6b**-Sam in the Art lesson (19.5.10)
> *(Reproduced as written in the historic present form)*
>
> *Now Sam laughs with the girl next to him while they put some glue on their paper. The girl bends her head towards Sam's left shoulder while she laughs with him. Another girl from the table next to Sam's holds some rope in her hands and asks Sam whether he wants some but he says he does not while he holds his own rope in his hands and shapes it with his fingers.*

Sam was working on a task for the Art lesson with other children. Sam seemed to be an active participant in his interaction with the girl sitting next to him. The girl appeared to be managing the interaction with Sam, which was possibly flirtatious. The giggling that accompanied her body posture facilitated her physical contact with Sam and suggested a kind of teasing, which possibly indicated her interest in him. The other girl displayed attention-seeking behaviour; her gesture of passing some rope to Sam tried to establish communication. It was obvious that she wanted to interact with Sam as he already held some rope in his hands. It appeared that the children, in their informal communication with each other, used their own evaluation frameworks, for Sam who had been presented by other students as *naughty* (Excerpt 5.16, *1, 4*) with a predisposition to *lying* (Excerpt 5.20, *8*)

Next, the conversations of students' without SEN and with SEN, both informal and formal, are analysed.

5.9.2.2The pupils talk

Part of the conversation from the focus group of the year 5 students without SEN is about the ways through which specialised resources are made available to peers with SEN and how this expanded their awareness of SEN.

Excerpt 5.16 **Students without SEN (year 5) Cas' classroom (5.5.10)**

Larry:	*He has improved because before he had to do different work to any other person in the class.*
Daisy:	*When he got to year four he had books that just had pictures in, but now he can like have a book.*
Paul:	*He's on like stage seven books.*
Daisy:	*He used to like have books with pictures in, but now he's got books with writing in them and he can read them.*
Larry:	*Well, the teacher would probably give them an activity and then the teaching assistant would probably go to the person who needs more help.*
Paul:	*Yeah, they probably would help like somebody sitting with them, telling them what to do.*

The students were talking about different tasks and resources, i.e. *books with pictures (3)*, *books with writing (17)*, and the role of the teaching assistant in supporting the children by sitting next to them and distributing different tasks. What produces different kinds of learning for students with SEN is the classroom agenda for achieving individual targets. The children also evaluated the progress of their peers with SEN in terms of level *(5)* and compared it with previous years *(6)*. They also discussed the limited autonomy of their peers in the process of learning as somebody else dominated what to do *(11-13)*.

In the following extract, children from year 5 talk about their peers with special educational needs and evaluate them their pace in managing activities.

Excerpt 5.17 **Students without SEN (year 5) Cas' classroom (5.5.10)**

Larry:	*You feel a bit upset because they can't do the same as you.*
Daisy:	*You feel a bit sorry for them.*
Paul:	*Yeah...*
Larry:	*Because they don't do the same as us, you have to give them support like help them through it.*
Bill:	*I feel really sorry for them because...*
Paul:	*And we have to wait for them to...*
Daisy:	*Yeah, you have to... be patient and let them do it because it takes them a bit longer.*
Larry:	*Like I a writing activity, about 20 minutes later some of us are on our third and fourth paragraphs.*
Daisy:	*And he's on his first.*
Bill:	*Yeah, they're on their first or second like, so you like to have a break and let them catch up, don't you?*

The children seemed to understand the difficulties that some peers might encounter with lessons. They were aware that they do not do the same tasks as the other children and sometimes feel *upset (1)* and *sorry for them (2)* because when they engaged in competitive games and finding out who had finished writing tasks first, then they showed tolerance. It might be that children with low ability expectations are defensive in their interactions with peers. They might have little motivation for accomplishing their goals. As Bandura (1981) pointed out, efficacy expectations are based on previous performance, which affects individuals' evaluations of their capabilities.

It could be that the children tended to internalise the evaluation of their teacher in relation to disruptive behaviour and appropriated the same criteria for evaluating their peers.

This evaluative stance became apparent in the next conversation between Sam and classmates coming from the focus group of the students with SEN of year 5.

Excerpt 5.18 **Mixed ability group of students with SEN (year 5) Cas' classroom (12.5.10)**

Louise:	*Because Sam's always being naughty.*	*1*
Sam:	*Well sometimes I'm not, am I?*	
Suzy:	*Yeah, like he's on his own table, like where you sit when you come, and Mr. Cas said, because he's naughty, but if he's good...*	
Sam:	*If I behave, then I get to sit on another table with somebody else.*	*5*
Louise:	*And it's done with Brandon because there's a spare seat on his table, so they're put together.*	
Albert:	*And he always asks Mr. Cas, but he's not allowed. Mr. Cas always says you've got to be good.*	*10*
Sam:	*Well, sometimes he lets me just sit there... sometimes*	

The children's management of their relationship with someone considered *naughty (1)* is strongly tied to the regulatory framework of the teacher. The children refer to the teacher as an authority to justify why Sam has been labelled in this way. Sam felt the need to defend himself against the accusations of his peers and resisted his identification as a naughty student. He negotiated this classification by placing emphasis on *sometimes (2)* as opposed to the *always (1)* his peers used. To strengthen his position he drew on teacher's decision to let him move tables, *sometimes he lets me just sit there (11)*. The explicit expression of regulatory discourse could affect the ways children understand their and others positions in the class. This means the children have incorporated into their evaluations specific rules. For example, Sam defined the *good student (5)* according to the regulatory framework mediated by the teacher's practices.

Of course, the children's evaluations of the profile of a good student might be differently expressed in their own conversations, as in this discussion, than when giving their views to the researcher, another authority figure. When children from

year 5 explained to me their teacher's definition of a *'good student'*, in Excerpt 5.19 below, they seemed to reproduce his voice in their talk.

Excerpt 5.19 **Students without SEN (year 5) Cas' classroom (5.5.10)**

Me:	*What does your teacher say is a good student in your classroom?*	
Daisy:	*Somebody who works hard and knows a lot of the questions.*	
Bill:	*And helps other people if you've finished and doesn't shout out at questions.*	
Larry:	*And like if the teacher sets you a task, don't rush it, take your time and make sure your handwriting is neat.*	5

The nature of the utterances the children produced in their discussion suggest repetition of their teacher's utterances : *works hard...knows a lot (2), helps other...doesn't shout out(3)* and *sets...a task...don't rush it, take your time...make sure...handwriting is neat (5-6).* These formulations are associated with the teacher's management of children's behaviour and academic performance.

Within the next discussion with children with SEN on how they define the *'good student'*, a kind of commitment and subordination to their teacher's definition is noticeable. This suggests the children had already internalised the evaluative perspective of their teacher, which they reproduce in their talk. This echoes a specific identity and positioning of children in terms of predetermined behavioural and academic criteria. However, the children also provided their own definition of a *good student* placing more emphasis on the role of others in providing support and in terms of their social identity.

Excerpt 5.20 **Students with SEN (year 5) Cas' classroom (12.5.10)**

R:	*What do you think means to be a good student?*	
Louise:	*Somebody who behaves. Somebody who is like... they get on with everybody.*	
Albert:	*They don't just go round with one person and leave..., they can share.*	5.
Sam:	*Somebody who will help when you're stuck.*	

The children associated the profile of a good student with sharing *(5)*, friendship and sociability *(3)*. This could mean that part of the children's identity rested on identification as participants in various groups, i.e. family, school, peer.

The reproduction of the rules for obedience and the restraining of autonomy have again been internalised and reproduced in the following conversation of children without SEN evaluating the behaviour of peers who have had their names placed on the chart list.

Excerpt 5.21 **Students without SEN (year 5) Cas' classroom (5.5.10)**

Larry:	*And Sam in our class, he is always moving down the chart and he gets into fights all the time.*
Paul:	*Thomas used to be the bad one for going on the chart but he's steadied down.*
Daisy:	*Because he were talking a lot and being silly.*
Bill:	*Thomas is probably on the chart once a week.*
Paul:	*He used to be on every day nearly, but he's calmed down a lot.*
Larry:	*Sam's near enough on it every day but Sam was here yesterday but he isn't here today.*
Bill:	*Like Larry said, it makes you feel embarrassed because they're not following school rules and they're like letting your class down.*

In the above discussion, the children were evaluating the behaviour of their peers according to the rules learned in the classroom. These rules constitute fixed behavioural profiles around which the children have constructed their evaluative frameworks. The children justified why their peers move down the list because he *gets into fights (2)* or was *talking a lot...being silly (4)*and firmly position themselves as students with good behaviour as opposed to the deviant behaviour of their peers.

Identities emerged as the children engaged in conversation with each other and communicated similarities and differences in their classroom positioning. It is interesting to see how the children communicated their moral judgements about people and events and how they challenged other's perspectives.

In the next discussion coming from the focus group of the children without SEN from year 5, the students conveyed personal meanings as they evaluated their peers' attitudes.

Excerpt 5.22 **Students without SEN (year 5) Cas' classroom (5.5.10)**

Larry:	*You could just go up to them and say, you're just telling a bunch of lies, like go and tell the teacher the truth and then you might not get in trouble, because if you tell lies you will get in trouble.*
Paul:	*I would say... telling lies and I got moved further down than what I was actually supposed to. If you tell lies and you don't... tell the truth and you keep on lying and lying and lying, it's going to get worse.*
Daisy:	*Last week when you said it was fine, it wasn't, it was the people's fault and that was because Sam always tells lies. When he's done something he says he hasn't done it when he has.*
Paul:	*Like Daisy, said, there was a problem a few weeks before we broke up... regarding two girls and Sam and the two girls were blaming it all on Sam, but Sam only like shoved them because they were provoking him. They was like, scratching him and things so Sam just pushed them to get them off of him.*
Daisy:	*Because you were saying they just like to annoy Sam and torment him and then...*
Larry:	*People go up to him and like...*

Daisy:	*it's Sam who gets in trouble.*

The children communicated moral stances concerning their values and beliefs about their social world while they established their own identities. It could be that the children had internalised the moral stances of the adults around them when they emphasised their opposition to *lying (1, 5, 6, 8)* or questioned the reasons for *get [ting] in trouble (17)* and this seemed to be a way of communicating the point they wished to develop. Larry stated his position about the consequences of lying and orchestrated communication with his suggestion about the way a student is expected to act in a specific context, *go and tell the teacher the truth and then you might not get in trouble, because if you tell lies you will get in trouble (2-3)* He used the authority figure of the teacher as a reference point to strengthen his evaluative position. Paul built on Larry's comment and shared the same evaluative standpoint about lying: *If you have lies and you don't... tell the truth and you keep on lying and lying and lying, it's going to get worse (5-6).* The sharing of evaluative stances, the collaborative positioning of the children in this dialogue and their familiarity with the content of the conversation is a reflection of the children's friendship.

In this discussion, some communicative techniques were connected with gender positioning. The children seemed to elaborate on each other's utterances throughout while the boys seemed to hold a more dominant position when compared to the frequency of answers from Daisy, who seemed to adopt a more egalitarian position when she told Paul that Sam's attitude invoked particular reactions - *it was the people's fault and that was because Sam always tells lies (7-8)* justifying the attitude of her peers towards Sam. There was antagonism between Paul and Daisy when they explored the reason for Sam having problematic relationships with some of their peers - *they just like to annoy Sam and torment him and then... (14).* Daisy maintained a dominant position in the discussion and made clear her evaluative alignment with regards the behaviour of her classmate, Sam. At the end, she seemed to take a collaborative position as she dropped back and completed Larry's comment on the unfair behaviour of their peers towards Sam - *People go up to him and like...(16)* with *it's Sam who gets in trouble(17).*

In terms of communicative style and language choices in the cross-gendered conversations, gender did not seem to affect the ways in which the boys and girls communicated with each other. Both genders seemed to participate in collaborative and antagonistic interactive styles as they became verbally competitive and strived to hold the conversational floor when elaborating a theme. The boys tended to be more dominant and verbally competitive in their utterances, while the girls tended to show more egalitarian and less hierarchical styles of speech.

There seemed to be a wide range of interactive styles among these children, which offer different opportunities to explore their gendered identities when they addressed personal comments to each other. The interactive style of Dina with boys, in Excerpt 5.23 orientated the conversation towards close cross-gender relationships.

Excerpt 5.23 **Students in mixed ability group task (year 5) Cas' classroom (21.4.10)**

Sam:	*Dina you've wet the paper.*
Dina:	*Sorry.*
Bally:	*Just ignore it.*
Dina:	*B****y h**l.*
Bally:	*Just ignore it.*
Lucia:	*That's enough, wet the paper. I don't want it any more wetted.*
Sam:	*Said b****y h**l.*
Lucia:	*Bally, Dina's wet the paper.*
Bally:	*Yeah well this time I didn't say anything back because I saw you, didn't say anything back to you.*
Dina:	*Sorry? Can you what? Well it depends what Bally thinks of it, doesn't it?*
Bally:	*I wouldn't...*
Sam:	*Not liking those strings to me.*
Bally:	*Baby... I believe you're a baby.*
Dina:	*Oh b****y h**k.*
Sam:	*What have you done?*
Lucia:	*Dina's wet the table, she's wet the piece of paper, she's wet me now.*
Sam:	*Dina!*
Bally:	*You've wet Lucia; she's going to get mad.*
Sam:	*I believe I can fly [singing]*
Bally:	*It's Sam...*
Sam:	*I believe I can touch the sky [singing]*

During this conversation, the children were engaged in a Science activity, which underlined their collective positioning to the task. They seemed to transform the task into an enjoyable and socially oriented activity, as they teased each other and Sam sang. Dina attracted the children's attention and dominated the conversation by wetting the paper and swearing throughout the conversation. This sustained the children's interactions as both boys and girls start playing within their talk. Bally kept his distance and was assertive about his decision by repeating the same phrase *Just ignore it (3).* Sam repeated the swear word Dina used while she was working. His evaluative position is revealed as he noted what she did - *said b.....*h... *(7).* It shows his role as a group member. Lucia's comment engaged the children again and she addressed Bally this time rather than Sam: *Bally, Dina's wet the paper (7).* She used an attention seeking pattern in her communication as Bally expressed fury to Dina about wetting the paper *I didn't say anything back because I saw you ... (9).* Dina and Lucia started to whisper together, signalling their friendship and collaboration and fostering closeness as they shared information with each other, obviously about Bally.

The content of the question whispered from Lucia to Dina, *what Bally thinks of it, doesn't it? (11),* is ambiguous and Bally's response leaves it incomplete *I wouldn't... (12).* It could possibly imply flirting or teasing between the boy and the girl or it could be relevant to the task. Sam communicated his lack of interest in the interaction between Bally and Lucia by making a comment about their project: *Not*

liking those strings to me (13). Bally teased Sam -*Baby... I believe you're a baby* (14) suggesting a friendly relationship and closeness to each other. Dina gained the attention of the children again as by swearing and repeatedly wetting the paper. The boys and Lucia complained about Dina's actions. Sam started singing *(20, 22)* and continued singing even though Bally interrupted him to express his detachment from the ongoing conversation or even his achievement in accomplishing the task. In their informal talk, the children signalled their evaluations of their peers' talk and actions. The children's informal talk also disclosed their friendship positions and their cross-gender interaction, whether antagonistic, collaborative or flirting.

These were some examples of how the students with and without SEN engaged and communicated during different tasks and the social relationships these produced between the students.

5.9.3 Panoptical Heights Overview

Cas organised his lessons based on different ability levels. The spatial arrangements in his classroom meant that the children with SEN were positioned at single desks away from the space of their peers, creating barriers to their socialisation with others, so they developed an asymmetrical relationship with the other children and the teacher. Cas moved students at the low ability level on to tables depending on how well they did, which is a different practice from Danny's and Bam's pedagogy.

The children's learning in this classroom was based upon the teacher's decisions about how the content of their individual targets derived from the National Curriculum would be mediated and delivered. The role of the TA in this class was not visible in lessons as in Sunny Hill. The extra support was sometimes given in the classroom and at others, in separate sessions. The impact of these practices on the interaction of the children was revealed in the examples above. Sam, who has behavioural difficulties, seemed to be labelled as a *naughty boy* by the teacher, a term which the children appropriated in their conversation. The behavioural management of the teacher and the regulatory system in his classroom disapproved of disruptive behaviour and consequently, these rules obstructed his and the children's freedom to interact.

Next, the role ability plays as an organising feature of the pedagogy in Bob's classroom at the Nova Spectrum School is discussed.

5.10 Nova Spectrum School

Steiner schools take a holistic approach to education focusing on the spiritual development of children. Nova Spectrum school does not put the children into a special category of need in order to differentiate them from other children. It provides conventional forms of SEN provision, but also employs practices based on the principles of Steiner education. The identification of the children with SEN relies on teacher observations of each child and their assessment and progress reports. As

the same teacher stays with the children for six years, he or she observes their growth throughout all the developmental stages, enabling strengths and weaknesses to be identified.

This school did not have any children with statements of SEN at the time of the research. It was the first academic year that it had collaborated with a special teacher coming in twice a week to support the children. In this school, only three children were identified with special needs in Bob's class. Carla had dyslexia and dyspraxia, Marcia had reading problems and May was weak in spelling and numeracy. The assessment of the girl with dyslexia and dyspraxia was made by a specialist teacher in her previous school. Provision for the specific learning difficulties of these children entailed *Eurhythmy*, which combines rhythm with movement and *Curative Education* (Steiner, 2000) with individual learning support lessons given by a specialist teacher who through activities strengthens the children's movements in space and time.

Generally, the school does not classify children according to conventional ability criteria as the Steiner system believes that such classification suppresses progress and acts against the interests of children in low ability groups. Therefore, children of the same age are not placed in different ability groups for different subjects. In Bob's class, children from years 4 and 5 are combined and there is different work for each year since Steiner's curriculum corresponds to children's physical age. However, the children are grouped according to temperament.

Children's temperaments are (2008:9-12) identified as either, *'choleric: someone who must always have his own way'; 'phlegmatic: static, impassive, plants each foot solidly'; 'melancholic: he cannot bend [his body] to his will'*; or *'sanguine: rush from one experience or sensation to the next'*. The temperaments that work well together are the basis for organising group work. The effect of temperament grouping on social inclusion and class management is important. As temperament polarities are avoided in the seating arrangements of the children, confrontations with the teacher are reduced. Conflicting temperaments, e.g. *melancholic-sanguine*, *choleric-phlegmatic*, would initiate defiance in response to the teacher's class management. Although 'temperaments' are used by the teacher as a strategy for classroom organisation, they also denote a form of positioning.

5.10.1The multimodal construction of ability in Bob's year 4/5 class

As pointed out, the children are not grouped by ability but by temperament. However, the placement of the three girls, Marcia, Carla and May, with learning difficulties is revealed in Figure 5.29 below.

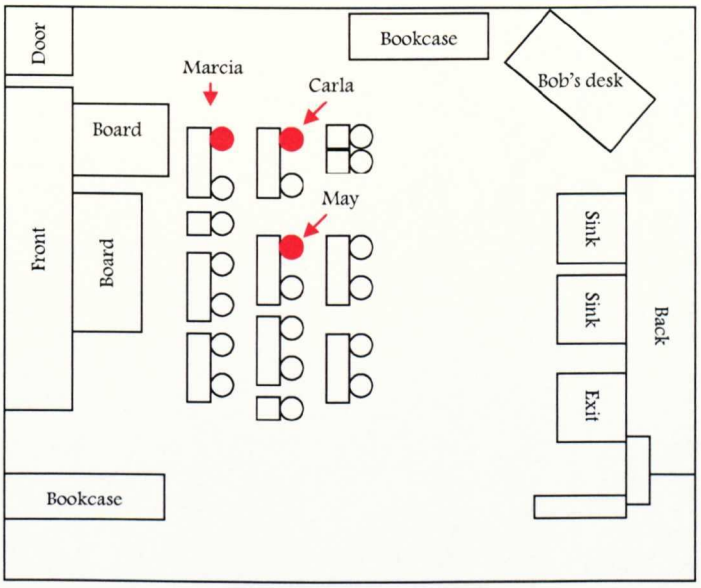


***Figure 5.29* Nova Spectrum School: placement of students with SEN in Bob's classroom (year 4/5)**

Differentiation based on the spatial arrangements of the desks in relation to ability does not happen in this classroom. The place of the two single desks in the layout is related to differences in temperament. Bob found it necessary to place two children in single desks because they could not concentrate on their work if they sat with others. It seemed that this practice mediated the authority of the teacher to decide the seating arrangements of his students based on the criterion of temperament, rather than ability. The three girls with learning difficulties were positioned in places where they were able to have eye contact with the teacher and see the black board. They were all seated on the right hand side of the room. They were not segregated from peers, as in Cas' classroom. The classmates sitting next to the girls did not have learning difficulties, which facilitated the process of working with a *more capable peer* (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978). Furthermore, they were able to interact easily with the child next to them rather than with the children at other desks, as Bob restricted communication between the desks in some subjects.

The positioning of the three girls in relation to Bob's desk located on the right hand side of the classroom enabled them to be monitored. The same was true if the teacher sat in front of the blackboard, as from there, he could observe the three desks. The presence of the single desk among the desks of the girls gave an open space for surveillance.

The children with SEN attended all the curriculum subjects with the rest of the class. There was some differentiation in the administration of tasks for those that struggled with some subjects. Bob explained:

> Bob: The children are aware that they need to do something different. There is differentiation in the classroom; different tasks, different expectations, different abilities, and different disciplines. (13.7.10)

Different work did not only relate to learning difficulties but because the combined group of years 4 and 5 children had to follow the curriculum that corresponds to their development stage. In his interview (13.7.10) the teacher described how he managed tasks in relation to age-appropriateness. He organised tasks for three groups, which he calls, *advanced*, *core* and *extra needs*. The children in the advanced group write directly in the main books, while core and extra needs groups use their practice books first and after the teacher checked their work, copied everything into their main books. This could be seen as a practice which enabled the teacher to monitor the progress of each child. It could be argued that the autonomy to decide on how to differentiate the content of the work for diverse needs lies with Bob. He claimed the children are aware of doing different work since they know they have weaknesses in some skills for their age. The seating arrangements, once Steiner's categorisation by temperament has been put in place, subsequently incorporated the same idea.

> Bob: It wouldn't help if I had put a learner that struggles with his learning next to a learner that also struggles with his work. (13.7.10)

This practice encourages mixed ability work as the *more capable* support the weaker students.

The subject content was managed by work plans or schedules. Bob chose a plan for the kind of activities and tasks required for the different school subjects for a certain period. A plan could continue for a period of three to four weeks, which allowed the children to work at their own pace. Throughout the teaching of subjects, the children worked with the teacher. The teacher explained that he sits next to them and offers them individual help.

> Bob: I do everything I can to support children in the classroom and sit or stand next to them to explain them analytically all the steps to solve an operation and guide them how to do it. I am there for the needs of all children in the classroom. (13.7.10)

A special teacher supported children that struggled with lessons outside the classroom, but the children had the freedom to decide whether they wanted to attend these sessions or not.

The children were active participants in experiential learning. In Bob's classroom, all the subjects were taught through verbal, musical and bodily expressions, which made it difficult to define what the learning was about at any given point. The

children expressed themselves together with the teacher through activities which promoted sharing between the children and more symmetrical relationship between the teacher and students. The same symmetry could be observed in the collective aspect of the activities where all the children talked, listened, argued, and negotiated, a practice which strengthened their communication. Bob orchestrated classroom activities which encouraged the inclusion of all the children in both executive and active student roles.

In his lessons, he encouraged the children's equal participation when he asked them whether they remembered a previous topic they had heard about. This was a collective activity for all the children.

Excerpt 5.24 **Students in a mixed ability group lesson (year 4/ 5) Bob's class (23.9.10)**

Bob:	*What do you really remember about the Egyptians? Do you know how they were preserving the dead bodies? Murphy...*
Murphy:	*They were putting the dead bodies into a cloth.*
Bob:	*Yes and is there anything else? Lazarus..*
Lazarus:	*They were placing the bodies in a sarcophagus* 5
Bob:	*That's right. But before that they were doing something else. They were moving part of their body organs. May?*
May:	*And then they were putting them into a cloth?*
Bob:	*Well, yes. I am holding a book here about Egypt which I will show you in a minute. Now you could see pictures of the mummification of Egyptian bodies.* 11
Nasby:	*What is that?*
Lee:	*This must be a sarcophagus...*
Bob:	*Yes it is. And here you could see a pyramid with the sarcophagus.*

The teacher invited the children to recall what they had previously learned in class. He asked questions in order to involve the children in the recall. He then used photos in a book to stimulate their interest as he moved around the desks and showed them the pictures. The children seemed to engage in the activity as they commented on the pictures and interacted with the teacher.

Distributing small roles to the students for taking on tasks seemed to encourage their active involvement in both the organisation of the tasks and the interaction with classmates. For example, Bob asked some children to take the atlases from other students' tables and put them on the teacher's desk while other children took the orange notebooks and distributed them to the class.

Excerpt 5.25 **Students in mixed ability group (year 4, 5) Bob's classroom (15.6.10)**

Bob:	*Could someone please get the atlases from the desks so that we could move on to our numbers? Tim and Sarah could you please... Who would like to give back the orange notebooks?*
Danny:	*Mr. Bob?*
Bob:	*Danny and Steven please... Are we ready children?*

The children seemed to share responsibilities with the teacher and classmates and became active agents in the management of some tasks in the classroom.

Moreover, they participated in activities that brought them together and helped their socialisation. Looking back at my field notes, I remembered an activity in which all the children were involved and I observed their interactions with other students and their teacher while they were building a dragon in the garden.

- **Field note 5.7**-Working on the land (30.9.10) *(written up shortly afterwards)*

> *Today, I was with children and their teacher who were building their dragon on the ground. They were all participating by using their spatulas and gypsum to cover the surface of the dragon. Bob was working with some students on the left leg of the dragon while others were watching and carrying for him all the tools he needed. The children were applying the gypsum carefully while some of them were singing and chatting. It seemed an activity where everybody needed to work with the others in order to give the dragon the form they desired.*

In this school, it seemed that learning was enshrined both at an individual level, where the child needs to concentrate in order to manage his tasks, and at a collective level, where the child acts together with other children, enjoying activities, helping each other, participating in extra-curricular activities, preparing social events, singing and working together on the land.

Part of my field notes describes a social activity in which all the children of year 4/5 were involved.

- **Field note 5.8**-In the Eurhythmy lesson (9.7.10)

> *The children were placed in two rows at random but in a position to see each other's faces as they stood there laughing. They held each other's hands standing in their rows and some children swung their arms back and forth and laughed again. Then they started singing. The girls and boys held each other's hands while they ran across the line and laughed.*

Through collective and emotional sociability, they realised their positions in relation to other children in the same space by becoming aware of their strengths and weaknesses, familiarising themselves with the opposite gender, facing each other and holding each other's hands and thereby expanding their togetherness.

The analysis of how communication is realised through gaze, gesture and talk among the children is discussed in the following section.

5.11 Ability groups and communication

5.11.1 Gesture and gaze in Bob's year 4/5 class

The children used gesture, gaze and posture to communicate sympathetic and compassionate feelings when Marcia, a girl with SEN, encountered a problem in the playground.

- **Field note 5.9**-Marcia's accident (25.5.10)

> *A teacher told Marcia, who had hurt her knees, to sit under the tree and put some water on her wounds. Some peers came closer and stood over her while the teacher cleaned up her cuts. A boy and a girl put their hands on her left shoulder and told her to hold on. Then one of the boys sat on the ground and smiled at her. He asked her whether it hurt. The girl cried.*

The teacher's position next to Marcia and her gesture in cleaning up her cuts made her physically close to the child. There was no sense of hierarchy on the teacher's side as she sat beside the child and remained there. The teacher told the child to sit under the tree which left an open space for the support of other children. A dynamic interaction evolved between Marcia and her peers as they came to comfort her. They kept eye contact as they placed their hands on her left shoulder; a gesture of friendliness, affection and understanding. The boy's sitting on the ground and his smile communicated compassion. His interest in asking Marcia about her pain provided her with relief and encouragement. The children seemed to develop intimate relationships with each other, even in cross-gender interactions. They were involved in personal communication with Marcia, which showed how close they felt in their relationship.

How interaction is realised in talk is explored further.

5.11.2 The pupils talk

The children's reported thoughts seemed to convey an inner state intimately related to the way they experienced local activities and their interactions in school, how they positioned themselves and how they were identified by others when they involved themselves in social practices. They discussed how they experienced their relationship with their teacher and how his practices facilitated their interaction with their peers. However, they expressed value judgements about the disruptive behaviour of some of their peers and criticised the ways in which they communicated their dissatisfaction to the teacher.

Excerpt 5.26 **Students without SEN (year 4/ 5) Bob's class (14.10.10)**

Murphy:	*I am thankful for actually helping me with how to do work*
Perosa:	*I feel the same. I am thankful for getting help with my reading problems.*
Nasby:	*Once you know how to complete a task, you can feel good; you feel embarrassed when you do not know how to do it so it is a nice feeling to get help from someone who can really help you...*
Perosa:	*not to get stuck*
Murphy:	*Well, it is not like what some of my friends have told me about state schools; you know where the teacher might say to students 'do that and then... bye'. He explains to us clearly how to solve a problem or how to complete an activity*
Lazarus:	*and he makes the lesson easier, fun... not boring.*
Murphy:	*He sings the steps of long division; this makes it easier for us to remember... and it's funny isn't it? Do you remember the song about the London Bridge?*
Nasby:	*No, which song?*
Murphy:	*The song he told us yesterday about the steps of long division. It was about the London Bridge... it was quite funny...*
Nasby:	*Oh, yes...*
Perosa:	*We feel happy when we work with him although there are some children who are not listening to him*
Lazarus:	*They chat with each other and do not let others get on with their work.*
Nasby:	*They sometimes turn round and make noise and the teacher tells them to keep quiet but then they do it again.*
Murphy:	*Sometimes these children shout in the classroom "we don't want this task because it's boring. We want to do something else" while all the others are doing this task and this is very annoying for those that are doing their work*
Nasby:	*Like Tina and Martin...*
Lazarus:	*And John with Sarah... They always make fuss in the classroom and are whining about the tasks that they would not like to do and would prefer something else.*
Murphy:	*The fuss starts from the tables in the middle and then builds up and builds up...*

This focus group expressed multiple perspectives of the teacher's pedagogic style which they found *easier, fun...not boring* (12). They had a tendency to complete each other's words when explaining how they felt about getting help from teacher or peers: *I'm thankful for getting help* (2), *it is a nice feeling to get help* (5-6). They expanded on each other's comments as they justified why they felt nice when they got support: *you feel embarrassed when you don't know* (5). They also commented on the teacher's way of explaining the steps for solving a task or incorporating helpful and joyful activities: *He sings the steps of long division...it was quite funny* (13). Murphy started with a strong position - *I am thankful for actually helping me with how to do work* (1) regarding his teacher's teaching style. He later appropriated

the comment of his friend about his state school to make a contrast between different teaching approaches while conveying his evaluation position: *you know where the teacher might say to students 'do that and then... bye'* (10).

The children also reflected in their interactions with their peers and their attitudes during the lessons, positions that expressed disapproval. It might be that children were annoyed by the disruptive behaviour of their peers or they might have assessed classmates/ behaviour based on their teacher's evaluation. The children used the third person - *They (21, 13, 30)* - to communicate their disapproval and to establish their own space: *these children... while all the others* (25) In this way, they seemed to take on the role of the *good student*. However, the children might have criticised peer behaviour because they were talking to an adult, i.e. the researcher. Their judgment and interpretations of peer behaviour might be different when engaged in informal conversations, when they might evaluate peer behaviours based on friendships and gender identities. The children refer to specific classmates (*Like Tina and Martin, And John with Sarah*) to ground their points and expand the discussion around peers. Lazarus and Murphy showed familiarity with the content of the discussion about peers and built on each other's comments: *They always make fuss (30), The fuss starts* (33) or paraphrased them: *we don't want this task because it's boring. We want to do something else (26-7), are whining about the tasks that they would not like to do and would prefer something else (31).*

Implicit ways of regulating behaviour can make children less aware of the purpose of their positioning. The children seemed to be oblivious of the purpose behind specific practices.

Excerpt 5.27 **Students without SEN (year 4, 5) Bob's class (14.10.10)**

Murphy:	*I don't understand why the teacher places some of the children in double desks while others are sitting in single desks. I don't understand that! Then he places those who are tall at the front desks and the short ones at the back. I have problem to see the board.* 5
Nasby:	*That's true! I have the same problem... I can't see with my left eye very well and can't see the board from where I sit.*
Murphy:	*I would change the order of the desks for these reasons.*
Perosa:	*Well, I sit at the front... at a single desk while there are two desks next to me. Only a girl sits there but the teacher doesn't let me sit with her.* 11
Interviewer:	*Why do you think this happens?*
Perosa:	*I don't know...*
Lazarus:	*There are some children in the unfortunate position to chat and turn round so... it could be that... which annoys other children*
Murphy:	*Yes, they start the children at the front desks and then...* 16

The implicit ways through which the teacher managed the classroom emerged in children's evaluations of their seating arrangements. Although the teacher claimed the seating positions facilitated his efforts to manage disruptive behaviour, the

children did not seem to be aware of the reason for sitting the way they did: *I don't understand (1, 2, 3), I don't know* (13). They showed compliance with teacher's decision although they evaluated these arrangements and judged them: *I have problem to see the board* (3), *I can't see with my left eye... can't see the board* (6-7). Lazarus attempted to provide an explanation for the seating arrangements while communicating his position to disruptive behaviour: *unfortunate position to chat and turn round...annoys other children (14).* Murphy then expanded his peer's comment: *they start the children at the front desks (16)* expressing familiarity with the topic and connoting collaboration and friendship with his peer.

May, Marcia and May, the three students with SEN discussed how they felt about attending the withdrawn sessions of special support with the specialist teacher, Daisy.

Excerpt 5.28 **Students with SEN (year 4/5) Bob's class (7.10.10)**

Carla:	*I find reading difficult...*	1
May:	*I struggle with numbers...*	
Marcia:	*I don't have any particular problems with my lessons... I can't think of anything although I have just joined the group of Mrs. Daisy for support. Bob told me to attend some sessions with Mrs. Daisy but I don't understand the reason because I don't have a particular problem with my lessons. I have no problems!*	5
Borgatta:	*I wouldn't know. But I'm glad I'm not in the group.*	
May:	*Bob does not always help and finds it easier to ask my friends for help. He sometimes becomes frustrated when we don't get it.*	10
Marcia:	*We understand that he is an adult and he could not think the way the children do.*	
May:	*He writes on the board in order to help us understand the lesson but sometimes he gets frustrated when we don't understand what he says and needs to repeat it.*	15

The children were engaged in a collaborative conversation and identified their problems with specific competences (*1, 2*), i.e. reading, numeracy to justify their involvement in the support group. Marcia showed resistance to her identification as someone needing extra help (*3*). She strengthened her position by repeating herself (*6, 7*). Borgatta, another student with SEN, expressed her disengagement (*8*) as she explained she did not attend the group. The girls shifted their attention to the teaching skills of their teacher (*9, 10, 13, 14*), possibly to explain their weaknesses in specific skills. However, it seems that they were more confident, even so far as criticising their teacher, with a much wider range of comments/input.

Bob's students also expanded their comments about getting or providing support to peers and explained their position.

Excerpt 5.29 **Students without SEN (year 4/5) (14.10.10)**

Murphy:	*In some lessons we work together while in others we work alone. For example, in Art, we work alone, don't we?*
Nasby:	*Yes but we could talk to each other...*
Perosa:	*and share water colours*
Murphy:	*And when we are doing numbers, we could help each other and work sometimes in groups*
Nasby:	*If you complete your work you are allowed to help others*
Lazarus:	*But only if you have finished with your work...*
Nasby:	*Well, I finish early most of the times and help others*
Murphy:	*Yes, he is very good at numeracy. And the children who have not finished feel less* frustrated because they have others to help
Lazarus:	*It feels good when my friend sits next to me and helps me with numbers.*

The children were discussing the benefits of peer support. They distinguished between collective (4) and individual activities (2) and expressed their preferences. They highlighted how they built their relationships in the classroom as the *more able* are encouraged to help their peers (7). Peer support extended to friendship relations as they developed intimate interactions through collective activities (12).

5.12 Nova Spectrum Overview

At Nova Spectrum, each child is treated as the *whole child.* The holistic approach in education encourages the inclusion of children with learning difficulties. As it is a basic principle of this school, Bob did not categorise the children in terms of ability. The children with SEN worked in the same classroom with the other children irrespective of their level of ability. There were some differences in tasks for children with learning difficulties but all the children followed the same curriculum subjects. Students worked in groups at their own pace (on the same subject for 3-4 weeks) or in some lessons, individually but the teacher allowed them to talk to each other. A specialist teacher offered support to Bob's children but the children had the freedom to decide whether they wanted to participate or not. The children were encouraged to be active learners in the classroom through the production of creative and expressive activities based on rhythm and movement. They seemed to be effective for the learning of all children since they do not highlight weaknesses but strengths. Moreover, the participation of the teacher in the activities developed a less hierarchical relationship with the students.

5.13 Conclusions

What is suggested here is that multiple factors affect the way children with SEN position themselves and are physically and conceptually positioned and identified in response to their teachers' expectations, their specific pedagogies, and their social relationships with their teachers and peers. The students expressed how they experienced their participation in classroom activities and how they felt when

interacting with their teachers and their peers through linguistic and non linguistic modes of communication. However, it appeared that the students with SEN in Nova Spectrum School were more confident in evaluating their teacher's practices, with a much wider range of comments/input in their focus groups as opposed to the students with SEN in the classes of Sunny Hill and Panoptical Heights. Moreover, the children's behaviour and performance are subordinated to explicit rules mediated through the teacher's specific practices - seating arrangements, ability grouping, sanctions, chart lists, wrist bands of 'super learners' and visual displays. As a result, the teachers communicated specific boundaries to the students, also expressed through the students' evaluations of their peers with SEN. The interjection of each classroom's rules and values into the views and evaluations of the children highlights the influence of control and power in the form of specific classroom discourses. The students expressed in their talk the authority of the teachers and the control the institutional practices have over them. However, they formulated their own positioning and negotiated their identities when they actively engaged in interactions with their own rules.

CHAPTER 6
DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

6. Introduction

The objective of the thesis is communication: how, and what is communicated to and by pupils with SEN and in what way; how this affects their socialisation and development within an inclusive education framework. To carry this out meant examining communication multimodally, through the classrooms' spatial organisation and the pedagogic discourses produced both verbal and non-verbal, between teachers and students.

The main research question was:

- In what ways are students with SEN identified and positioned in mainstream education settings by their teachers and peers?

The following sub-questions emerged:

1. Which forms of pedagogy **benefited** the inclusion of students with SEN in the specific school case studies?

2. Which forms of pedagogy brought **obstacles** to the successful inclusion of students with SEN in the case study schools?

3. What **best practice** for the inclusion of students with SEN could be identified in the specific schools?

In the next section I discuss the findings of the study.

6.1 Discussion of the findings

The main research questions will be addressed in Chapter 7, the Conclusion. This section considers the data from the academic and social aspects of education, as they are particularly emphasised in the legislation and recommendations regarding inclusive education in the UK.

The study which I conducted through observations, interviews, and the visual material of the classrooms and the subsequent data analysis showed that the different pedagogic discourses articulated the nature of the social relations between the teachers and the students and between the students themselves in their own dialogues. The education experience of the students with SEN was not the same in all the classes, since each class was a unique educational microenvironment with special sociocultural parameters.

In the following section, I will discuss my results around four main axes,

- Grouping
- Semiotic evidence
- Pupil discourse
- Conclusions about classification and framing

First, I look at each sub-area separately, and discuss any similarities or differences identified between the four classes in the three schools, Sunny Hill, Panoptical Heights, and Nova Spectrum.

The tables in this chapter serve to indicate whether the classes provided supportive learning and social interaction environments during the research period according to the four axes above. The data summarised in the tables come from in and outside class observations, interviews with the teachers and the TAs, the students' focus groups and the visual data. These indicators suggest the tendency of each class over the research period towards a more or less equitable and inclusive environment for all the students. The parameters *positive, negative* and *neutral* - no discernible positive or overtly damaging negative tendency - under the categories *Academic* and *Social* indicate the positioning of the class with regards to both the students with SEN and those without.

6.1.1 Grouping

Forms of grouping were evaluated in all four classes studied in the three primary schools under study. The participant observations and the interviews with the teachers and the TAs, as well as the focus groups of students with and without SEN showed that at an organisational level, grouping was instantiated as part of the school practices as students were categorised by ability, and behaviour/temperament.

Table 6.1 gives an indication of the support that grouping appears to give - regarding both the academic and social areas - of the positioning and identification of all the students and thus, the degree of inclusion in the specific classrooms. The general tendency was that when the students with SEN were positioned in the low ability groups (as in the Sunny Hill and Panoptical Heights classes) both their performance and social interaction with their peers were reduced. This also created the need to work more with the TA than the class teacher, which inhibited the teacher's opportunities to learn more about the weaknesses of their students. Grouping by ability assigned specific academic and social identities to the students with SEN, either as less able students or as naughty, based on the focus groups of students reporting the teachers used this practice to monitor performance and manage behaviour.

Table 6.1 Grouping

Class	Academic positive	Academic neutral	Academic negative	Social Positive	Social Neutral	Social negative
4/5 SH	Non SEN		SEN	Non SEN		SEN
6 SH	Non SEN		SEN		Non SEN	SEN
5 PH	Non SEN		SEN	Non SEN		SEN
4/5 NS	SEN Non SEN			SEN Non SEN		

Legend: 4/5 SH = year 4/5 class, Sunny Hill School
6 SH = year 6 class, Sunny Hill School
5 PH = year 5 class Panoptical Heights School
4/5 NS = year 4/5 class Nova Spectrum School
SEN in a box indicates the environment for SEN students
Non SEN in a box indicates the environment for non SEN students

Table 6.1 suggests that only in the Steiner school was grouping supportive of SEN students in both academic and social areas (and indeed of non SEN students). The placing of students with SEN in the low ability group in both classes in Sunny Hill and the Pamoptical Heights class did not seem to facilitate the educational progress and inclusion of the SEN children in full class teaching as their educational needs, as perceived by the teachers, were mainly addressed through additional support from the TAs. From the interviews with the TAs of year 4/5 of Sunny Hill and of year 5 of Panoptical Heights (see Ch.5; Section 5.3.1 & 5.4.1) it seems the teachers required their support, as much as the SEN children, in order to lighten their work load. Grouping by ability meant the SEN children were isolated, could not engage in peer learning or exchange ideas with their peers most of the time, as they interacted mainly with the TA. Furthermore, this practice maintained the identity of these students as the students with SEN and promoted their assimilation only with other students in low ability groups. Consequently, their social needs were not met either. It seemed that grouping by ability supported the needs of the teacher as much as, or possibly more than, the needs of the children, especially the SEN children. It seems that the students with SEN in these classes were not the only or even main target of the TA's intervention. It may even be that class teachers saw the TAs role as being to support them.

Year 4/5 class at Nova Spectrum School, were still grouped, but by temperament, not ability. This kind of organisational differentiation was not expressed explicitly, as grouping by ability was. There was no observational evidence that made this type of grouping visible. According to the teacher's interview, this implicit practice benefits all the students as grouping by complementary temperaments allows the students to collaborate while also facilitating the teacher's management of disruptive behaviour. It appears that the grouping by temperament did not constrain the social relations of the students with SEN as their communication with peers was not restrained by their level of academic ability.

In year 4/5, 6 and 5 classes of Sunny Hill and Panoptical Heights, respectively, grouping by ability determined the implementation of specific educational practices and created more needs which the teachers had to face. Within this context, the

core issue was diversity, and how it was framed within the specific classrooms. The provision of curriculum differentiation, special resources, i.e. books, pictures, special equipment, could encourage the development of cognitive and behavioural skills and the mastery of practical tasks by children with SEN. However, it seemed that this grouping reinforced the separate identification of the students with SEN in the classroom and their positioning in low-ability groups. The differentiation of resources affected the social relations between the students with SEN with their peers, making any weaknesses more visible and assigning them specific identity positions. Their peers in the focus groups expressed either sympathy to the problems of SEN children or they labelled them as *less clever*.

By contrast, the observations and interview with the teacher of year 4/5 at Nova Spectrum showed that there is more scope for student-centred approaches. The students' ages varied, so the teacher employed differentiated group work for the students to be taught the Steiner curriculum, which is more flexible and incorporates age-appropriate tasks. The differences in tasks responded to the diverse needs of all the students and did not seem to make more prominent the needs of the students with SEN. The teacher also provided the main support in the class, not the TA, who held sessions outside the classroom and at break time, twice a week, and the attendance of the students with SEN was not obligatory. TA sessions were extra, not replacement sessions. This practice affected the students' social relations in a positive way, as they did not express in their focus groups any awareness of each other's academic weaknesses and thus, these weaknesses did not seem to act as barriers to their communication.

6.1.2 Semiotic evidence

The next main theme that emerged from the data was the semiotic evidence in each class and the sometimes contradictory messages conveyed which allowed alternative interpretations. Tables 6.2-6.9 indicate the trend in each class regarding the educational and social support for the students with SEN based on key semiotic features - the seating arrangements, classroom decoration, content and production of displays, and the meaning they conveyed regarding each teacher's pedagogy, use of resources, and teacher/students interactions. Table 6.2 shows that when students with SEN were seated apart, while their peers were seated in mixed ability groups, their interaction with the TA was more frequent and they communicated less with the class teacher and their peers. When the students with SEN seating arrangements were organised according to ability groups, their academic involvement in whole class learning was minimal as they interacted only with those of the same ability and thus, could not challenge their capabilities with higher ability peers. Interaction with the class teacher and their peers was also constrained as the nature of the activities the seating arrangements facilitated was more individualistic and less of a collaborative nature. However, even in the case of collaborative tasks in mixed ability groups, sometimes the nature of the tasks was individual as the pace of the task was beyond the capability of the students with SEN and this inhibited their interaction with peers and positioned them as passive learners not involved in the production of knowledge.

Table 6.2 Semiotic evidence-Seating arrangements

Class	Academic positive	Academic neutral	Academic negative	Social Positive	Social Neutral	Social negative
4/5 SH	Non SEN		SEN		Non SEN	SEN
6 SH		Non SEN	SEN		Non SEN	SEN
5 PH		Non SEN	SEN		Non SEN	SEN
4/5 NS	SEN Non SEN			SEN Non SEN		

Legend: 4/5 SH = year 4/5 class, Sunny Hill School
6 SH = year 6 class, Sunny Hill School
5 PH = year 5 class Panoptical Heights School
4/5 NS = year 4/5 class Nova Spectrum School
SEN in a box indicates the environment for SEN students
Non SEN in a box indicates the environment for non SEN students

The findings illustrated in Table 6.2 are very similar to those in 6.1, suggesting the impact grouping has on seating, and that the reverse may also be true – change the seating and the grouping in social terms, may change. The study found that in the classes Year 4/5 and 6 Sunny Hill School and Year 5 Panoptical Heights (See Table 6.2) the seating arrangements of the students with SEN were based on ability. Although their peers without SEN were seated in mixed ability groups of 3-6 students, the students with SEN were seated individually. This practice appeared to segregate the students with SEN from their peers, as the physical space between them created distance and inhibited their academic and social interaction, involved them in more individual and less collective tasks and the practice of learning with more capable peers (Vygotsky, 1978) was constrained. Moreover, the single seating of the students with SEN in Sunny Hill year 6, promoted more interaction with and systematic support from the TA, who most of the time, sat next to them. Therefore, the TA had more contact with the student than the class teacher. In the Panoptical Heights class, the students were in groups by ability while the students with SEN were marginalised in single desks in terms of their poor performance and disruptive behaviour. According to the teacher's interview, the students in his class were aware of the hierarchy of ability and the limits set by him regarding behaviour. For this reason, the seating arrangements facilitated the need to monitor behaviour. The SEN students' involvement in group work was limited. In Sunny Hill year 4/5, the students with SEN sat in the low ability group. The constant presence of the TA with this group made the needs of the students for additional support more visible to other students, and minimised their interaction with the class teacher. Socially, the students with SEN in the low ability group interacted only with their peers at the same table, which marginalised them from the rest of the groups. Nevertheless, this physical segregation might have benefited their peers without SEN as they interacted academically with the same ability level students and were not interrupted by disruptive behaviour. It can be seen that the physical seating – positioning – of the students seemed to support the conceptual notion of segregation, whether by ability or behaviour.

However there were contradictions. Although the seating arrangements of the students in Sunny Hill class 4/5 seemed to give more emphasis to on group work and

less on individual learning and the teacher in his interview identified the need for the students with SEN to be socially involved with their peers, in fact, his teaching style seemed to contradict the idea of interactive work. The activities in which the students were engaged were competitive rather than collective, which the organisation of their seating could have facilitated. The activities required the students to strive for superiority, involving winners and losers, which appeared to be a problem for the students with SEN as they could not follow at the same pace as their non-SEN peers to reach the targets of their team. At the same time, however, this could have had the reverse effect of motivating them and boosting their self-efficacy levels (Bandura, 1986).

In the Nova Spectrum class, all the students sat in rows, one student next to another, in such a way as to give the teacher space to monitor of the students' progress and behaviour. It appears that there was no visible evidence of physical segregation by ability or conceptually as the observations, the teacher's interview and the focus groups with the students revealed. The class teacher instructed all the students, which facilitated his interaction with them. Moreover, the students were involved mainly in collective interaction. The teacher in his interview expressed the need for all the students to develop both academically and socially through a balanced pedagogy for the growth of soul and spirit.

As there are national constraints on pedagogy in state schools, the organising impact of the curriculum on the students' seating arrangements is closely related to school policies, streaming and curriculum requirements but their realisation in classrooms appeared to be associated partly with the teachers' perspective on how to incorporate the official curriculum into a personal teaching style and philosophy. Table 6.3 shows that when the teacher's pedagogy focussed both on the educational and social side of learning, it was less monologic and more dialogic and interactive; the students with SEN had more visual and verbal interaction with the teacher and more communication with their peers. Moreover, they were active participants, speakers in the process of learning and not only listeners. By contrast, the students with SEN interacted less with the teacher and their peers, were passive learners and listeners, as the teacher employed a more monologic communicative mode or in some cases, a dialogic communicative mode but with monologic qualities. This table shows indications of how each of the teachers' pedagogy enhanced or inhibited the academic and social inclusion of the students with SEN from observations and interviews.

Table 6.3 Semiotic evidence-Teacher's pedagogy

Class	Academic positive	Academic neutral	Academic negative	Social Positive	Social Neutral	Social negative
4/5 SH	Non SEN	SEN			SEN Non SEN	
6 SH	Non SEN		SEN			SEN Non SEN
5 PH	Non SEN	SEN			SEN Non SEN	
4/5 NS	SEN Non SEN			SEN Non SEN		

Legend: 4/5 SH = year 4/5 class, Sunny Hill School
6 SH = year 6 class, Sunny Hill School
5 PH = year 5 class Panoptical Heights School
4/5 NS = year 4/5 class Nova Spectrum School
SEN in a box indicates the environment for SEN students
Non SEN in a box indicates the environment for non SEN students

The study found that in Sunny Hill year 4/5 although the students with SEN sometimes participated in group activities, they worked with the same ability students at the same tables and communication with students at other tables was constrained. Although the teacher in many cases wanted to involve them in interactive activities, the nature of the activities was educational rather than social. Thus the activities did not enhance mixed ability interaction. Moreover, the students with SEN had less visual and verbal interaction with the teacher as their table was positioned away from the teacher's position at the front of the class. The teacher used informal language when instructing the students but although his communicative mode was the dialogue, the question-response format made communication teacher initiated and controlled attributing a monologic quality, and little interaction. The same was observed in Panoptical Heights, where the teacher sometimes involved the students with SEN in mixed ability groups in interactive activities with an educational focus. The talk seemed to be dialogic but was teacher initiated with one-sided monologue qualities as he used the question-response format and gave instructions about how to work and what he expected from interactive work. Although the students had the opportunity to collaborate, this was constrained by the teacher's focus more on the academic and less on the social side of the activities. The pace at which the students had to accomplish their work minimised their interactions with their peers. Therefore, although students engaged in collective activities, they promoted more individualistic work as the teacher determined the pace and criteria for the completion of tasks. As a result, the students with SEN were passive and dependent on their peers as they copied from them to complete their work. Visual and verbal contact with the teacher was minimal.

In Sunny Hill year4/5 and Panoptical Heights as in Sunny Hill year 6, the teachers seemed to place high value on the preparation of the students without SEN for the National Tests and thus, emphasised the educational side of their pedagogy. Consequently, the teachers created boundaries tor communication between the groups of students. The social side was less prominent in Sunny Hill year 6 so the students with and without SEN were involved less in collaborative tasks and more in individual and same ability group work, which hindered interaction. As the nature of

the activities were educational rather than social, the students with SEN worked more with the TA to keep pace with their non-SEN peers. The class teacher preferred to use formal language when instructing the students and produced authoritarian monologues which positioned the students with SEN as passive learners who were incapable of actively participating in the learning process.

In Nova Spectrum the teacher elicited responses from the students through dialogic communicative mode and positioned them as active agents in the construction and distribution of knowledge. His teaching style adopted a more student-centred approach, so activities became inclusive and kept the students' attention as the process of learning was shared between the teacher and the students and occasionally, peers took on the role of teacher. Thus, the teacher took a less authoritarian position and he appeared more flexible in his teaching style. This 'progressive' pedagogic practice could be seen as part of a liberal educational environment (Bernstein, 1990). The progressive pedagogic practice was also evident in the students' participation in extra-curricular social activities which enabled them to develop social awareness with emphasis on their social aspect of their development.

The study found that monologic and dialogic qualities were also revealed in the teacher's use of resources for communicating knowledge to the students with diverse abilities. Table 6.4 shows the tendencies towards more or less inclusive practices. When the teacher employed a multimodal representation of the curriculum and used resources and technologies that enhanced the active participation and learning of the students with SEN with a diverse range of needs, the social side of their development was also supported as more interactions with the teachers and their peers developed. By contrast, where the teachers had the resources but used them in ways that did not foster interaction between the students for the production of learning and to support their diverse needs, the students with SEN remained passive both in their interaction with the class teacher and with the TA, as they regulated the process of learning.

Table 6.4 Semiotic evidence-Teacher's use of resources

Class	Academic positive	Academic neutral	Academic negative	Social Positive	Social Neutral	Social negative
4/5 SH	Non SEN		SEN		SEN Non SEN	
6 SH	Non SEN		SEN			SEN Non SEN
5 PH	Non SEN	SEN			SEN Non SEN	
4/5 NS	SEN Non SEN			SEN Non SEN		

Legend: 4/5 SH = year 4/5 class, Sunny Hill School
6 SH = year 6 class, Sunny Hill School
5 PH = year 5 class Panoptical Heights School
4/5 NS = year 4/5 class Nova Spectrum School
SEN in a box indicates the environment for SEN students
Non SEN in a box indicates the environment for non SEN students

The observations showed that in year 4/5 Sunny Hill, although the teacher could have used the interactive whiteboard for the teaching of core subjects, like Literacy and Numeracy, he preferred a more traditional mode of discursive instruction, the question-answer mode of communication. This practice did not enable the students with SEN to access curriculum subjects in alternative formats; their different needs required different management. Consequently, they interacted less with the teacher and more with the TA who supported them through more systematic and individualised work. Occasionally, in subjects like, Art, the students brought materials from home and learned how to use them for a specific task, thus promoting, to a certain extent, a cross-cultural curriculum, combining school knowledge with out-of-school knowledge. This situation promoted more interaction between the students although mainly within the same ability group.

In Sunny Hill year 6, the teacher did not appear to use any interactive modes for teaching curriculum subjects. The teacher used an authoritative pedagogic model to instruct the students, when, for example, they read the context of a book or explained verbally a phenomenon in Science without any support from resources. The teacher's strict and monomodal instruction approach did not support the students' with SEN, who had needs in multiple areas of learning. Socially, the students with SEN did not interact with their teacher or with their peers as their instruction was mainly non-interactive/non-dialogic. It seemed the teacher's main aim was to support the academic, not the social aspect of the students' learning.

In Panoptical Heights, the teacher's use of the interactive whiteboard, sometimes engaged the students in interactive learning of the core subjects of the curriculum. Thus, this class is academically neutral in Table 6.4, as this occurred in some subjects while in others, instruction was less interactive and more individualised. The students took part in interactive activities on the whiteboard, which supported the learning of the students with SEN as the instruction included both verbal and visual elements. From a social aspect, while there was more interaction with the teacher, the students were engaged in discursive interaction, i.e. questions-answers, which positioned the students and the teacher hierarchically, with the teacher as the expert and the students as non-experts in the production of knowledge. As the teacher managed the pace of interactive activities and the interactions of the students, it was difficult for the students with SEN to communicate with their peers and share ideas. It appeared the intentions of the teacher in resource use were more teacher-oriented as they facilitated his work and the management of disruptive behaviour.

In Nova Spectrum, the teaching of curriculum subjects tended to be cross-cultural. The flexibility of the teacher's instruction through a multimodal representation of the curriculum enabled the students with SEN to learn using various verbal and non-verbal resources. Although the teacher did not have any digital resources, like an interactive whiteboard, he used action, gesture, speech, images and tools to engage the students in interactive learning. For example, the teacher used movement, constructed a model dragon, changed the context when they worked on the land, and used materials to help the children understand the concepts of volume, height,

width, design, balance, presented in a more dialogic/interactive way. His interactive/dialogic teaching allowed the students to interact with their peers while being practically involved in using resources, which positioned the students in their conversation as both speakers and listeners, unlike in the other classes. The scope for intimate pedagogy and spirituality in this class promoted more intimate relations between the teacher and the students and between the students. The students with SEN appeared to be positioned as expert as their teacher in the production of knowledge, so positions were less hierarchical in teacher/students and student/student interactions. However, teacher's dominance was instantiated in the management of the dialogues as he arranged the equal participation of speakers and in his responsiveness to each student's contribution to the dialogue for encouraging and supporting their participation.

The interactions of the students with and without SEN were also evident in the ways the activities promoted verbal and non-verbal communication, i.e. talk, gesture, gaze, and posture. Table 6.5 shows student interaction. Students with SEN tended to engage less in verbal and non-verbal interactions with either teachers or peers academically and/or socially when activities were competitive or teacher-centred. By contrast, students were involved in more verbal and non-verbal interactions when activities fostered both their academic and social collaboration and were more student-centred.

Table 6.5 Semiotic evidence- Student/student interaction

Class	Academic positive	Academic neutral	Academic negative	Social Positive	Social Neutral	Social negative
4/5 SH		SEN Non SEN			Non SEN	SEN
6 SH		Non SEN	SEN			SEN Non SEN
5 PH		SEN Non SEN			SEN Non SEN	
4/5 NS	SEN Non SEN			SEN Non SEN		

Legend: 4/5 SH = year 4/5 class, Sunny Hill School
6 SH = year 6 class, Sunny Hill School
5 PH = year 5 class Panoptical Heights School
4/5 NS = year 4/5 class Nova Spectrum School
SEN in a box indicates the environment for SEN students
Non SEN in a box indicates the environment for non SEN students

In Sunny Hill 4/5 and Panoptical Heights the teachers sometimes used group activities where the SEN students' interactions with peers were constrained within same ability groups and the competitive nature of the activities, or by monologic interactions with the teacher which positioned the students as non-interactive and passive learners. In both classes it seemed that collaboration did not imply any social intentions, but fitted the needs of the teachers to monitor the progress of the students and their behaviour. In Sunny Hill year 6, the students with SEN had no verbal or non-verbal interaction with their peers as the teacher involved the students in more individualised tasks. In Nova Spectrum the teacher's approach to

interactive/dialogic activities enhanced the students' verbal and non-verbal interaction as the activities had both academic and social aims.

Among the semiotic evidence, classroom decoration conveyed several contradictory messages about the environment of the classes. Table 6.6 shows the tendencies of each class towards more or less inclusive classroom decoration. When classes had more educational and fewer social displays, they reinforced the educational more than the social development of the students with SEN. The intentions of the teachers were signalled in curriculum-based displays, with fewer on the social values of school life. Classroom decoration seemed to be more teacher-oriented. Moreover, some classes used visual resources to communicate curriculum knowledge which did not involve the students actively in the production of knowledge. If class decoration involved less educational material and more student-oriented work, this suggested the space was more student-centred, with emphasis on the social side of education. Such displays of student initiated material suggested an interactive mode of communication.

Table 6.6 Semiotic evidence- Classroom decoration

Class	Academic positive	Academic neutral	Academic negative	Social Positive	Social Neutral	Social negative
4/5 SH	Non SEN		SEN			SEN Non SEN
6 SH	Non SEN		SEN			SEN Non SEN
5 PH	Non SEN	SEN			SEN Non SEN	
4/5 NS	SEN Non SEN			SEN Non SEN		

Legend: 4/5 SH = year 4/5 class, Sunny Hill School
6 SH = year 6 class, Sunny Hill School
5 PH = year 5 class Panoptical Heights School
4/5 NS = year 4/5 class Nova Spectrum School
SEN in a box indicates the environment for SEN students
Non SEN in a box indicates the environment for non SEN students

The photos and observations of the classes showed that in Sunny Hill classes although the students shared the same space with the teacher, the teacher's space was visually more prominent, as it communicated the teachers' aims to promote curriculum content and social values. Emphasis was placed on academic targets for students according to the standards of the National Tests. The content of the displays emphasised a more advanced level of curricular knowledge, the criteria for appropriate learning, which socialised the students into the competences of the classroom, and seemed to be addressed mainly to the high ability students. On the other hand, it could be argued that as the students with SEN were exposed to such stimuli, their academic performance could have been challenged and thus, their efforts reinforced. In class year 6, the teacher placed high value on social values and behavioural rules, supported in her interview when she stated that the students knew the limits in terms of behaviour. However, in neither class were the social benefits of classroom decoration apparent as their intentions were less social and thus, did not motivate the students to socially interact.

In Panoptical Heights the teacher's visual displays had a more prominent position than the space for the students' work. The teacher's displays emphasise the teacher's interests, the educational context of the curriculum, and behavioural norms in terms of rewards and punishment, with emphasis on the latter. The students had some space for their art work, which supported part of their social needs. In Nova Spectrum the teacher and the students shared the same space for their activities. It appears from the observations and photos that the students' work was in a prominent position in the classroom space, while the teacher's was situated in a less prominent position. The visual displays put no emphasis on curriculum knowledge but were more student-oriented. The objects displayed in this classroom reflected both the students and the teacher's interests around both the academic and spiritual development through the Steiner curriculum, and in that way were more social and collaborative.

The impact of the teacher was also apparent in the production of the displays. Table 6.7 shows that when the production of displays was teacher-oriented, the influence of the teachers was prominent and less interactive or collaborative with the students. The student-oriented production of displays showed a more flexible and less hierarchically structured environment in which the students could communicate their interests and be actively involved in the production of the material culture of their classroom.

Table 6.7 Semiotic evidence- Production of displays

Class	Academic positive	Academic neutral	Academic negative	Social Positive	Social Neutral	Social negative
4/5 SH			SEN Non SEN			SEN Non SEN
6 SH			SEN Non SEN			SEN Non SEN
5 PH			SEN Non SEN		SEN Non SEN	
4/5 NS	SEN Non SEN			SEN Non SEN		

Legend: 4/5 SH = year 4/5 class, Sunny Hill School
6 SH = year 6 class, Sunny Hill School
5 PH = year 5 class Panoptical Heights School
4/5 NS = year 4/5 class Nova Spectrum School
SEN in a box indicates the environment for SEN students
Non SEN in a box indicates the environment for non SEN students

The photos and the observations showed that in Sunny Hill classes the classroom displays were more teacher-oriented. This was evident from the strictly organised content and neatly-framed presentation of most of the displays, their contrasting colours, were mainly products of the teachers. This practice did not seem to benefit the students with SEN as they were excluded from the production of these displays. The impact of the teachers on the production of the students' displays was apparent in the criteria used for producing work, which were determined by the teachers. This practice had a similar effect on the students' social inclusion as the production of displays promoted no interaction, either with the teacher or with peers. In Panoptical Heights the displays were teacher-oriented in terms of their content and

framing and the criteria upon which the students produced homogeneous work. However, the framing of the student displays was not done by the teacher, so the students had some control over the presentation of their work. This practice benefited them socially as they produced and presented displays without the interference of the teacher. In Nova Spectrum, the students produced work based on the teacher's criteria for production, which were more spiritual than practical. The outcome was evident in the quality and heterogeneity of the students' work, displayed in the classroom without any interference from the teacher regarding either content or presentation. This benefited the students both academically and socially as they experienced the process of how to produce a work and gained confidence. No hierarchical relationship with the teacher was evident.

6.1.3 Pupil discourse

Table 6.8 indicates what the students with SEN expressed in their informal and formal conversations about positive or negative experiences of their academic and social interactions with teachers and their peers. The impact of the institutional practices on the students' talk is identified.

Table 6.8 Pupil discourse-Students' with SEN perceptions

Class	Academic positive	Academic neutral	Academic negative	Social Positive	Social Neutral	Social negative
4/5 SH			SEN			SEN
6 SH			SEN			SEN
5 PH			SEN			SEN
4/5 NS	SEN			SEN		

Legend: 4/5 SH = year 4/5 class, Sunny Hill School
6 SH = year 6 class, Sunny Hill School
5 PH = year 5 class Panoptical Heights School
4/5 NS = year 4/5 class Nova Spectrum School
SEN in a box indicates the environment for SEN students
Non SEN in a box indicates the environment for non SEN students

The study found through the focus groups that in both Sunny Hill classes the students with SEN seemed to have poor perceptions of the academic benefits of inclusion for them as the teaching strategies and learning content did not suit the needs of individual students. Lack of instruction adapted to different learning styles, differentiation by ability seeing individual needs as homogeneous within ability groups, affected their perceptions of their academic prospects (Bandura, 1981). These students tended to express low aspirations and motivation as they identified themselves as low achievers, and tended towards *learned helplessness*. Their positioning as passive learners in the learning process, the lack of teacher motivation as well as their poor peer collaboration led them to perceive their poor performance as lack of cognitive skills and school failure (Licht & Kistner, 1986).

In Panoptical Heights, any academic benefits to the students with SEN in terms of their inclusion were difficult to identify as they expressed poor self-perception of their social positioning in the classroom. This was related to the teacher's attitude to

undesirable behaviour and the teacher's regulatory framework for behavioural punishment. The students with SEN felt marginalised in the classroom, being labelled as naughty students rather than for poor academic performance. Their social relations with peers in the playground also seemed to be poor but they maintained some interaction even in the form of resistance to peer bullying because of their disruptive behaviour. However, the student with EBD preferred to interact in large group games with students from other classes.

By contrast the students with SEN in Nova Spectrum appeared to benefit both academically and socially as the nature of classroom activities promoted collective and emotional sociability. The students with SEN expressed positive self-perceptions of their academic attainments as the teaching and learning strategies involved the students in activities with their peers with shared responsibility for their accomplishment. The nature of these practices enabled them to develop positive perceptions both at the individual and collective levels as they expressed peer togetherness in their focus groups and considered their peers as friends.

The outcomes illustrated so far suggest positive and supportive inclusive environments are possible for SEN and non SEN students together, but involve not just implementing various positive practical strategies, but supporting this with a belief system involving notions of equity, personal development as well as recognising difference.

However, the social positioning of the students with SEN and their negotiation of identity was further evidenced in the formal and informal conversations of the students with and without SEN. These conversations made explicit or implicit reference to the positive or negative nature of the inclusion of the students with SEN in these classes. Table 6.9 summarises the students' comments on the academic and social involvement of the students with SEN in class and expresses the key perceptions that emerged from the focus groups conversations with the non-SEN students.

Table 6.9 Pupil discourse-Students' formal conversations (Non SEN students/ comments)

Class	Academic positive	Academic neutral	Academic negative	Social Positive	Social Neutral	Social negative
4/5 SH		Non SEN	SEN		Non SEN	SEN
6 SH			Non SEN		Non SEN	SEN
5 PH		Non SEN			Non SEN	SEN
4/5 NS	SEN Non SEN			SEN Non SEN		

Legend: 4/5 SH = year 4/5 class, Sunny Hill School
6 SH = year 6 class, Sunny Hill School
5 PH = year 5 class Panoptical Heights School
4/5 NS = year 4/5 class Nova Spectrum School
SEN in a box indicates the environment for SEN students
Non SEN in a box indicates the environment for non SEN students

In Sunny Hill classes the study found that the students without SEN expressed in their focus groups the concept of hierarchy as they distinguished their academic

levels from their peers who they were positioned as low ability students. The students seemed to express their evaluations through their own perceptions but also the semiotics of the classroom. The social positioning of the students with SEN in the focus groups by the non-SEN students was in terms of sympathy for their academic problems and positive perceptions of the TA support for their peers in withdrawal sessions but their awareness of the nature of their problems appeared to be poor. Concerning their social interaction with the students with SEN in the playground, their comments were sympathetic as they had a lower position in the hierarchy and critical of their peers' resistance to interacting with them. It seemed that their positioning towards their peers with SEN had the quality of an, *us* and *them* distinction.

In Panoptical Heights the students without SEN focus groups revealed their awareness of how their SEN peers identity differed from that of the 'good student' in terms of the teacher's criteria of good academic performance and good behaviour. The students formed their evaluations around what was accepted as good or naughty behaviour in their classroom, emphasising the behavioural rules. Consequently, the students expressed disapproval and criticism of social behaviour of the student with EBD. By contrast, in Nova Spectrum, the students without SEN focused on their collective activities and the ways they built their relationships with all the students in the class. The positioning of these students did not refer to academic performance or differentiation by competences but there was reference to the disruptive behaviour of some students who were not SEN students. Overall, they expressed positive evaluations of the academic and social experiences of school life.

However, students' without SEN views about their own and the academic positioning and identification of their peers with SEN also emerged in their informal conversations in the classroom, when occasionally they participated in mixed-ability group tasks. Table 6.10 indicates the views that these conversations revealed towards the academic and social benefits of their peers with SEN and themselves.

Table 6.10 Non-SEN Pupil discourse-Students' informal conversations

Class	Academic positive	Academic neutral	Academic negative	Social Positive	Social Neutral	Social negative
4/5 SH		Non SEN	SEN		Non SEN	SEN
6 SH		Non SEN			Non SEN	SEN
5 PH		Non SEN			SEN Non SEN	
4/5 NS	SEN Non SEN			SEN Non SEN		

Legend: 4/5 SH = year 4/5 class, Sunny Hill School
6 SH = year 6 class, Sunny Hill School
5 PH = year 5 class Panoptical Heights School
4/5 NS = year 4/5 class Nova Spectrum School
SEN in a box indicates the environment for SEN students
Non SEN in a box indicates the environment for non SEN students

In Sunny Hill, the students without SEN tended to adopt a hierarchical/authoritarian position with an imperative tone in their voices when interacting with their peers with SEN in shared activities. They tended to dominate the conversation and thus, the students with SEN had little the opportunity to improve their skills and learn from their more capable peers. They were positioned as passive learners in their verbal interactions with their peers and the social implications were their maintaining poor social skills, being dependent on their peers' support. In Panoptical Heights the academic benefits to the students' with SEN in verbal interactions in group activities was associated with the extent of their participation as active speakers and not as passive listeners. They occasionally exchanged ideas and negotiated how to accomplish a task although the students without SEN appeared to hold more dominant positions in their conversations, so reducing the contributions of their peers. Informal conversations during tasks did engage SEN pupils in social interaction and cooperation in tasks with non-SEN peers. In these conversations there was an atmosphere of equality as both pupils with and without SEN shifted in their dialogues from work to play, as they sang, flirted or teased each other, but sometimes the nature of their interactions was not constructive. In Nova Spectrum, the students appeared to have positive views about their academic and social life and their interactions with peers. Their informal talk involved issues of friendships with peers and other students at the same school and types of group oriented activities on the playground.

The academic and social benefits of the inclusion of the students with SEN and their realisation through the classroom discourses relates also to different degrees of classification and framing.

6.1.4 Conclusions on classification and framing

Table 6.11 shows that when the classes put firm boundaries in defining the academic classification of the students with SEN, the same classification functioned as barriers to their social relations with their teachers and peers. By contrast, where the students' SEN are assimilated by more flexible and less strict pedagogic practices, the interaction with teachers and peers was also enhanced.

Table 6.11 Classification and framing

Class	Academic positive	Academic neutral	Academic negative	Social Positive	Social Neutral	Social negative
4/5 SH	Non SEN	SEN			SEN Non SEN	
6 SH			SEN Non SEN		Non SEN	SEN
5 PH		SEN Non SEN			SEN Non SEN	
4/5 NS	SEN Non SEN			SEN Non SEN		

Legend: 4/5 SH = year 4/5 class, Sunny Hill School
6 SH = year 6 class, Sunny Hill School
5 PH = year 5 class Panoptical Heights School
4/5 NS = year 4/5 class Nova Spectrum School
SEN in a box indicates the environment for SEN students
Non SEN in a box indicates the environment for non SEN students

The study through the observations, interviews with the teachers and the TAs, formal and informal conversations of the students, verbal and non-verbal data, revealed that in Sunny Hill classes and Panoptical Heights classes, the teachers' pedagogic practices created barriers to the academic and social interaction of the students with SEN with their teachers and peers. In Sunny Hill year 4/5, although the students with SEN had separate educational provision as a low level group, their occasional participation in shared tasks gave them the opportunity to interact. In Sunny Hill year 6, the barriers were more distinct and explicit as the SEN students' interactions were mainly with the TA, which isolated them both academically and socially. In Panoptical Heights the students with SEN poor performance and disruptive behaviour marginalised them and created barriers to their academic advancement and social interaction with the teacher and peers. However, there were occasional mixed-ability group tasks in which the students with SEN participated and interacted with their peers. Nova Spectrum had no explicit academic classification of the students and group activities had social aims, so there were no distinct boundaries between the academic or social positioning of the students with SEN either with their teacher or peers.

From these table summaries of the academic and social trajectories of education, only Nova Spectrum School approach appears having a positive and nurturing environment for the inclusive education of all pupils.

6.2 General Conclusions

The study identified that Sunny Hill and Panoptical Heights classes, student progress and achievement were monitored in the core subjects of the National Curriculum, i.e. English, Mathematics, Science. These schools' policies and practices had to be understood in relation to the national tests in the context of the National Curriculum approach to assessment. The schools' targets were set according to the Ofsted reports to maintain their high academic standards or a high position at the league table.

On this basis, the differentiation of students by ability was the result of official state agency standards and the legislation on disability, the official pedagogic recontextualising field (Section 3.4.1.3) (Bernstein, 1990) that governs the production and distribution of practices through which knowledge is to be transmitted and acquired by students with SEN and the organisation of schools for this purpose. Decisions about the statutory assessment of students with SEN and their special provisions are the remit of agencies in the educational system, like LEAs. At classroom level, their regulations are actualised through the pedagogic process, for example, by placing students with SEN in (usually) low ability groups with a differentiated curriculum, where the seating arrangements position them either in ability groups or individually, with systematic support or withdrawn sessions with a TA. The formal school knowledge that is thus developed through social interventions in the processes of recontextualisation has consequences for those targeted, at both the academic and social levels. The study suggests simplification of the practices for the teaching and learning of the students with SEN does not enable them to progress or enhance their social relations with the

class teacher and their peers as their interactions were constrained by these practices. Instead, marginalisation and social isolation were experienced by the students with SEN.

The teachers' responsibility for the selection and implementation of specific practices in their classrooms needs to be seen in the context of power relations and principles of social control. According to Bernstein (1991) both power and social control govern the social practices that develop in schools, which are agencies of cultural reproduction and regulate the consciousness of teachers and students. Power relations create, legitimise and reproduce boundaries between the students with and without SEN. Power relations are associated with the categories of SEN and without SEN or the high and low ability students at classroom level. This symbolic control establishes legitimate forms of communication suited to the high and low ability student groups in each class (Bernstein, 2000). Through symbolic control, the teachers actualised their practices through different discourses and produced a specialised form of consciousness in the students. The rules of symbolic control were acquired through tacit acquisition of the academic and social competences communicated through the *hidden curriculum* (Section 2.2.2) in each class and through explicit teaching under the special and differentiated arrangements for the students with SEN. The pedagogic discourses specific to each class were incorporated into their instructional and regulatory discourses. Instructional discourses transmitted specialised knowledge for the students with SEN, mainly transmitted by the TA. The regulatory discourse marginalised the students with SEN physically and conceptually as a way of maintaining social order in the classroom (Bernstein, 2003).

In the Sunny Hill and Panoptical Heights classes, there was strong classification of children with SEN and strong framing of teaching for the children with SEN which did not allow them to adjust to the pace of the class and so their academic and social inclusion was not possible. The position of the teachers and students was hierarchically structured, which restricted their verbal and non-verbal interactions with the teachers and their peers. The same restrictions were evident in the playground from the observations; the students with SEN were either isolated or marginalised. Classes in these schools had a visible pedagogy (Bernstein, 1991) as they emphasised specialised forms of knowledge as well as strict processes of transmission and evaluation and placed emphasis on performance, on the student's product. The educational practices actualised in the communicative context of these classes reflected the analysis at the micro-level of teacher/students and students/student interactions and were formed by the structural elements of the state and government agencies. These elements were the socially structured and culturally dependent aspects of the students' ability, the form and content of the formal school knowledge set up by the rules of recontextualisation and the ideologically-dependent pedagogic theory of the teachers. As these classes were characterised by strong classification and framing, they were implicitly acquired by the students and regulated their consciousness and behaviour in terms of their positions and identities in the power relations with their teachers and peers.

By contrast, Nova Spectrum, an independent school with a Steiner curriculum, experienced greater autonomy and thus, its structure and organisation had less impact from government power and control. The level of classification and framing was weaker and the pace of teaching was adjusted to the diverse needs of the children. Furthermore, the boundaries were weaker between knowledge and extracurricular knowledge, fostering efficient learning and participation in the educational process and a positive attitude towards education. The weak framing of the content of learning was promoted through different practices that suited the different learning styles of the students and contributed to the inclusion of children with SEN in the learning process and their active participation. Moreover, weak hierarchical relations between the students fostered more verbal and non-verbal interaction in and outside the classroom. The consideration of student needs by the teacher, the varied pace of learning, the selection, and organisation of the temporal ordering of knowledge transmitted and acquired in the pedagogical relationship and the processes of assessment, and an emphasis on a practical approach to learning developed positive attitudes by the students to their academic and social inclusion. The curriculum was recontextualised through practices for the transmission and acquisition of knowledge that incorporated mental, emotional, physical and spiritual properties and emphasised the development of intellectual and physical skills (Steiner, 1996). The class integrated the practices of an invisible pedagogy, as the students were identified as autonomous learners in a weak hierarchical relationship with the teacher and comparatively informal assessment practices emphasising the process of transmission/acquisition. The students' positive perceptions about schooling emerged from the school's values as it did not operate on the basis of the diversity of the students.

The Sunny Hill and Panoptical Heights classes' tendency towards stronger classification and framing meant their semiotic evidence gave more emphasis to either the instructional and/or regulatory discourse. Educational policies were reflected in the ways pedagogy was semiotically represented in these classes. The material production of the semiotic resources, their design, production and distribution (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001) revealed the principles of power and symbolic control were as they produced pedagogic structures that marginalised and positioned the students with SEN differentially. It appeared that the educational policies in England shaped the social relations between teachers and the students with SEN and with their peers through policies on ability grouping, the organisation of group/individual work, lesson organisation, and classroom organisation. Thus, the meaning making in these classes from a social semiotic lens, emphasised the elements of the visible pedagogies, focusing on the performance and behaviour of the students and less on their socialisation. The *ideational meaning* (Kress, 2001) of the classroom organisation in terms of the ability group/individual seating arrangements, teacher-oriented content of the displays, competitive and individualised activities, distinct differentiation on curriculum and resources for the students with SEN, underlined the curriculum's knowledge representation and the hierarchical access to knowledge, the academic and behavioural competences that the students needed to socialise, while the *interpersonal meaning* of this semiotic evidence reflected the non-interactive, hierarchical and monologic, or dialogic

interactions but with monologic elements, between the students with SEN and their teachers and peers.

Moreover, the *ideational metafunction* (Jewitt, 2006) of the curriculum through which knowledge about the world was represented by the visual displays or the objects available in these classes suggested the inability of the curriculum to meet the diverse learning needs of the students. In terms of the *interpersonal meta-function* of the curriculum, the students with SEN did not have equal access to the same knowledge as their peers and thus, the differentiated curriculum and the specialised resources for its distribution positioned the students, producing a *textual meta-function* according to which the students with SEN were physically and conceptually segregated either from interacting with the teacher and/or with their peers. By contrast Nova Spectrum School's student-centred pedagogy meant the ideational meaning of the semiotic evidence delineated both the academic and spiritual development of the students, and the interpersonal meaning of the resources promoted more intimate social relations with the teacher and the students at both academic and social levels. The distribution of the Steiner curriculum to all the students through multiple and practical activities appeared to fit the diverse needs of the students and any visible differentiation in terms of ability was eliminated.

As the Sunny Hill and Panoptical Heights classes reproduced teacher-oriented pedagogies, the *Designs of Meaning* (Section 3.2.1) (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000:23) showed how teachers and students interacted based on the available semiotic resources, the *Available Designs*; and how these semiotic resources were transformed by the teachers, The *Redesigned*, based on their subjective values and beliefs about the pedagogy of the students with SEN and the school values. The process of identifying which modes of communication prevailed and what kind of social relations they produced was important as they were influenced by how society conceptualises diversity and disability and on this basis, how these values were represented in the context of each class within which they were used (Kress et al, 2001). The *material affordances*, that is, the materials (Jewitt, 2006) of the resources, i.e. interactive whiteboard, employed as a medium of knowledge transmission, were influenced by the curriculum, the state school, the LEA, the government. The *social affordances* of the resources, that is, the ways they are used, in these classes did not bear any social intentions and as such, the ways teachers used them did not promote any dialogic/interactive relations with their students or between the students and did not support the diverse learning styles of the students with SEN. Moreover, the ways the resources were used by the teachers produced hierarchical social relations with the students, presenting them as experts, with the students positioned as non-experts in the production of knowledge. Consequently, the students' with SEN's active participation and contribution to the production and transmission of knowledge was inhibited and their needs were not met.

The resources were used by the teachers, the *signifiers*, who communicated the *signified*, (Section 3.2.3) their intentions and interests (Kress, 1993) concerning the values of the schools and highlighted the design of the education policies and the

performative culture of these schools (Bernstein, 1996), which emphasised the students' performance, behaviour, and assessment. However, the design of the discourses in these classes sometimes conveyed contradictory messages, as the *expression* (Section 3.2.1) (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001) of the discourses through, for example, seating grouping, situated the discourse in a dialogic communication, while the distribution of competitive or individual activities situated the discourse within a hierarchical system of abilities. In these classes, the students acted as *represented participants* (Section 3.2) (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) as they were not actively involved in the production of the semiotic evidence, but were the subjects around which this evidence was produced in the form of the displays, seating arrangements, teacher's talk, posture, distance, all of which conveyed the academic and social values of each class and upon which the students with SEN appeared to create their subjective experiences of exclusion.

Conversely, in Nova Spectrum School, the aim of the teacher was to select resources to guide the students through their personal and academic progress using activities that would allow them to participate in the production and distribution of knowledge and thus, the students were *interactive participants* (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). This practice revealed the values of a more inclusive pedagogy as the expression and distribution of the discourses communicated the collective production and equal distribution of knowledge to all the students through which they constructed their self-identities or multiple identities in terms of the roles they were assigned in the discourses of the classroom (Williams et al., 2007). As power relationships were instantiated in the discourses of this classroom and the operation of symbolic control was carried out through specific semiotic evidence, it appeared that more symmetrical and less hierarchical social relations developed between the students and the teacher.

The effect of power relations and symbolic control on the students' with SEN positioning and identification was also realised through pupil discourse. In Sunny Hill and Panoptical Heights classes the degree of classification and framing was stronger; the internalisation of the institutional classifications of ability could be identified in the verbal interactions of the students and in the construction of their self-perceptions. The social practices within these classes constructed corresponding verbal interactions which served the power relations of the specific contexts (Burr, 1995). According to Skelton (1997), the messages of the hidden curriculum are conveyed to students through the multimodal representation of pedagogy. In their discourse, the students with and without SEN expressed implicit messages that referred to knowledge, values, norms of behaviour and attitudes that they experienced in and through the educational processes that in these classes.

The conventions of social ordering (Section 3.4.1.3) (Foucault, 1979) in these classes became part of the children's evaluations using institutional labelling of their peers as *epileptic* or *dyslexic*. Even when the students without SEN used their own evaluating and labelling terms like 'different', 'less clever', 'strange', this stressed the divergence of their peers and their own higher positioning through distinguishing between *us* and *them*. The impact of the institutional classification

and hierarchy on ability was so strong that the students without SEN in their focus groups reproduced the voices of their teachers, in *unidirectional double-voicing* (Bakhtin, 1981) as their evaluative stances were similar to those of the teachers' identification of the benefits of special provision for the academic progress of their peers with SEN. The appropriation of the teachers' voices for discussing their peers reflected the power effect of these voices on their evaluations to allocate the identity of good or naughty student (Bakhtin, 1981). In Sunny Hill classes, where the instructional and regulatory discourses were communicated explicitly, the students reproduced their teachers' voices in discussing how a *good student* or a *naughty student* is conceptualised. At Panoptical Heights, where a regulatory discourse prevailed, both students with and without SEN appropriated the teacher's voice to conceptualise the identity of a *naughty* student. Through classroom discourse, the students were socialised to the explicitly communicated rules, norms, values and identities and the teachers employed, the *authoritative discourse* (Section 3.3.3) for socialising the students into school procedures. Consequently, the students identified the students with SEN according to particular authoritative points of reference, thus presenting themselves as similar or different to others. The students' reproduction of authoritative voices indicated their internalisation of institutional power and conventional expectations of behaviour and performance; these voices were used as reference points for developing their own evaluative stances about the students with SEN. In the *persuasive discourse* of the students' without SEN focus groups there was reference to authority figures to persuade their interlocutors about their positions and also express their commitment to the teachers' authority. The internalisation of the teachers' evaluations was reflected in the hierarchical positioning the students with SEN adopted when they communicated with their peers during shared tasks.

However, the students with SEN negotiated their identities in the focus groups as they resisted their positioning by their peers, either academically or socially. The students with SEN all three state schools expressed their negative experiences of socialisation with their peers; they identified themselves as disabled, having poor self-image, poor academic attainments, and poor aspirations, which made them aware of their social positioning. From this standpoint, the processes of learning and the social development of the students with and without SEN was not transmitted automatically from teacher to the student, but was part of the process of *hybridization* (Bakhtin, 1981), where the students through their participation in *dialogic* (Bakhtin, 1981) conversations continuously compare, negotiate and construct their evaluations among their different perspectives.

The students without SEN constructed their own evaluations and were either sympathetic or critical of the restricted socialisation, isolation, and poor academic attainments of their peers with SEN. Shared voices or collaboration by completing each other's utterances was evidenced when both students with and without SEN tended to agree on something if they shared the same information, were friends, had the same interests, commitment to school norms, or signalled a particular identity position. Moreover, the dynamics were different when the students negotiated the identities of the students with SEN in their focus groups; some

tended towards a more powerful role to direct the conversation and elicit responses from others. This struggle for dominance was not gender-determined, as both girls and boys took part. Regarding the positioning of gender within talk, the girls in both groups - the students with and without SEN - tended towards more nurturing and egalitarian positioning, while the boys tended to be more authoritarian and dominant. In the focus groups of the students with SEN, the girl was not defensive or critical of her experience of bullying, while the boys were more aggressive as they tried to resist their assigned identity and bullying by other peers. However, the students without SEN tended to engage in more dynamic dialogues, sometimes with overlapping voices. Students with SEN tended to lower their voices during discussions.

In Nova Spectrum School, with weaker classification and framing, the impact of the conventions of performance and behaviour were not explicitly expressed in the students' with SEN focus groups, and the impact on their evaluations of their peers' performance and behaviour appeared to be minimal. The participation of the students in dialogic interactions enabled them to become familiar with diverse needs. The students did not differentiate themselves from the students with SEN, as they did not identify any differentiation. Their reference to the teacher's voice as a reference point for the validity of their evaluations was minimal. However, the *progressive* pedagogic practices and the values of the liberal educational environment (Bernstein, 1990) on the development of the physical, mental and spiritual qualities were already internalised by the students and the impact of their symbolic control was reflected in the students' perceptions of communality, togetherness, and intimate pedagogic relationships with their teacher and peers, which they communicated in their focus groups and informal conversations. However, in the focus groups of the students with SEN, some had previously attended another school with ability grouping labelled themselves as dyslexic/dyspraxic. Furthermore, as this school emphasised learning according to the students' different developmental stages, no need to discuss any differences in their academic performance emerged in their discourse, which focused more on age-related issues, such as cross-gender interaction and friendships.

6.3 Summary

The study illustrated the various forms of positioning and identification of students with SEN to help explain why the concept of inclusion in each classroom was realised differently, how pedagogical discourses were produced and what kind of interests these served. It appeared that the students with SEN in the Sunny Hill and Panoptical Heights Schools, which were characterised by stronger classification and framing, more teacher-centred pedagogic discourses developed strict boundaries, affecting their equal access to knowledge and their social positioning and barriers to their effective social and academic inclusion. By contrast in Nova Spectrum School, the inclusion of the students with SEN was more effective, as there were weak boundaries between the content of the knowledge transmitted, more student-centred approaches, and the academic and social benefits of inclusion were reflected

in SEN students' symmetrical interactions with their teacher and peers and their active participation in the production of knowledge.

CHAPTER 7 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7. Introduction

This chapter summarises the findings in response to the research questions and explains some of the lessons learned from carrying out the research. The theoretical construct of multimodal communication, developed by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), was most useful for constructing a holistic view of how the identification and positioning of the students with SEN are realised and mediated through verbal and non-verbal forms of classroom communication. Bernstein's (1977) theory of classification and framing was helpful for decoding the meanings of the semiotics in each classroom and in identifying the factors that facilitated or inhibited the inclusion of the students with SEN in these classrooms. Bakhtin's (1981) theory of dialogism was helpful for identifying the meanings that words bear in the dialogues and monologues of the student groups and teachers of specific classes and their significance in determining the identity and positioning of the students with SEN. Steiner's (1985) theory of child-centred pedagogy was useful for looking at the curriculum and how learning can be creative and constructive through less hierarchical and authoritarian pedagogic approaches.

In the next section, I summarise the main points that answer my research questions.

7.1 The central question

In what ways are students with SEN identified and positioned in mainstream education settings by their teachers and peers? In response to this question, the findings from this research found that

- The students are *identified* in the classroom through formal assessment of their ability, their poor academic and social skills, formal assessment and statements of their SEN, and by school practices that highlight their differences (3.4). According to Bernstein, the ideological function of classroom discourse is to construct specific student identities and reproduce students' classification through power relations. Moreover, in 6.1.1, Table 6.1 Grouping by ability, indicates that the SEN children were categorised in high and low ability groups, so could not engage in peer learning or interact with their peers most of the time, as they communicated mainly with the TA. This practice maintained the identity of these students as 'the students with SEN' and promoted their assimilation only with other students in low ability groups. Their social needs were not met either. This result supports previous studies, presented in 2.3.1 where some of the negative effects of inclusion highlighted the low academic performance of students with SEN, feelings of failure (Dyson, 2003), poor socialisation with peers and teachers (Estell et al, 2008; Bakker & Bosman, 2003) and low aspirations about their future (Lackaye et al, 2006).

- The students are identified by peers through their labelling as SEN students by formal assessment (6.1.3 and 3.4.1.3) or informal means, such as seating or classroom notices (6.1.2, Table 6.2 and Table 6.6; 3.2.2) their physical marginalisation through seating arrangements (6.1.2), their differentiated educational provision (support as discussed in 6.1.4 and3.4.1.5), their poor social skills, class teachers' attitudes towards them, and educational and behavioural rules targeting them (6.1.2, Table 6.3). Previous studies (2.4, Table 2.4) regarding diverse views of the inclusion of students with SEN indicate that placing these students in mainstream settings with additional support and/or separate tasks might not promote their inclusion (Ainscow, 2000) as they may not have equal access to the same educational material and consequently, are stigmatised (Murray & Lawson, 2007).

- However, in another setting (Steiner, 1981), the students with SEN can be identified by teachers and peers as 'equal' learners, with a range of intelligences and multiple spiritual, emotional, academic skills (3.5.1 and 6.1.2, Table 6.3; 6.1.3,Table 6.9).

- The students are *positioned* through formal educational arrangements involving special provision at classroom level (6.1.1, 6.1.2; 3.2.3 and 3.4.1.4) and also by their teachers' perceptions of disability, for example, the degree of familiarisation with mild to severe educational needs, their training, and their personal responses to diversity. For instance, in Sunny Hill and Panoptical Heights classes, the teachers tended to view SEN as homogeneous in nature, treated through fixed practices, whereas in the Nova Spectrum class, the needs of the students were seen as heterogeneous by the teacher, offering various responses to these needs. (6.1.2, Table 6.3 and Table 6.4).

- The students with SEN are positioned by their peers at a distance, both educationally and socially. They tend to be less popular because of their poor academic skills. For example, in Chapter 6 Table 6.9, the study showed that the students with SEN from the Sunny Hill classes were positioned by their peers in terms of an ability hierarchy. Although their non-SEN peers were sympathetic to their poor academic and social skills, they interacted less with them inside and outside the classroom. Moreover, SEN students were accepted less in playground games, and were less popular as friends (6.1.3, Table 6.8). They were positioned in terms of the academic and/or behavioural rules of their classrooms (6.1.3, Table 6.8). This conclusion supports previous studies in Chapter 2 (2.6.1, Table 2.7) which show that as the social status and self-esteem of students with SEN are interrelated (Woofolk, 1995), students with SEN experienced lower peer acceptance compared to their non-SEN peers and developed fewer friendships (Koster et al., 2010) because of their

poor academic attainment (Vaughn et al., 1998) and their social deficits and disruptive behaviour (Roberts & Zubrick, 1992).

- However, students with SEN are also positioned by some teachers as competent, active learners, (6.1.2, Tables 6.3 and 6.4; 3.2) and as experts in their various ways of producing and transmitting knowledge (6.1.2, Table 6.4). They are positioned by peers as friends and competent classmates (6.1.3, Table 6.8). Some previous studies referred to in Chapter 2 (2.7.1, Table 2.10) had different findings; Meltzer et al. (2004;2001) showed that some teachers' perceptions of students' with SEN attainments identified them as less able due to their cognitive deficits, poor learning strategies and organisational skills but, when they progressed academically , they were perceived as more capable and were rewarded.

Sub-question one asked

1. *Which forms of pedagogy* ***benefited*** *the inclusion of students with SEN in the specific classrooms studied?*

The pedagogies that seem to benefit students with SEN in the different classrooms of Sunny Hill, Panoptical Heights and Nova Spectrum schools are identified from the research findings of this study and also from the literature review, and summarised below. Positive forms of pedagogy seemed to involve:

1. Student-centred, cross-curricular learning activities, which are flexible in relation to diverse learning and social needs. Analytically, these activities include:

- Student-centred practices, involving flexibility in curriculum transmission, combining both school knowledge and everyday knowledge to enable all students, irrespective of their learning needs, to access knowledge. This was exemplified in Steiner education (3.5.2).

- Multimodal realisation of the curriculum through practices that suit different learning styles in terms of 'multiple intelligences' (3.5.1). Chapter 6.1.2, Table 6.4 shows that the use of cross-cultural and multimodal presentation in the Steiner curriculum through visual-spatial, bodily kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal and linguistic (Gardner, 1999) activities enabled the teacher to cater for the diverse learning needs of his students and to instigate their participation and interaction through a *transformative learning* approach (Taylor, 1998).

2. Collaborative and interactional/dialogic learning activities have both social and academic benefits for the students with SEN.

- Active participation in collaborative, dialogic activities for the construction of knowledge and for social growth was evident, as described in 6.1.2, Table

6.5, where the students with SEN in the Steiner classroom were engaged in more dialogic and socially-oriented learning activities and thus enabled to interact more and to socially expand. This is based on Steiner's (1943) *anthroposophy* as the theoretical basis of teaching to allow children to develop both personally and socially (3.5.2).

- Dialogic interaction between teacher and students allows the teacher to identify the learning problems of each student and encourage the student to discover how knowledge can be accessed through scaffolding. This was exemplified in the Steiner classroom, when, for example, the classroom activities were adapted to each stage of the student's mental, spiritual, psychological development and stage of consciousness (3.5.3). Moreover, the teacher's use of resources (6.1.2, Table 6.4) enabled the students to actively participate in the construction and acquisition of knowledge and the teacher's pedagogy (6.1.2,Table 6.3) engaged the students in sharing teaching/learning responsibilities and the delivery of knowledge, thus creating more active and less passive learners. In the Panoptical Heights class, in some lessons, the interactive teaching resources of the teacher engaged some students in interactive learning (6.1.2, Table 6.4).

- Peer learning through collaborative mixed ability tasks so that students with SEN have the opportunity to learn alongside more capable peers, not as listeners, but as active participants in the scaffolding of knowledge. They can thus establish their position as equal learners and develop a reciprocal contribution to the construction of knowledge. For example, this was evident to some degree in Panoptical Heights, where the students with SEN actively shared responsibility for accomplishing a task in non-core curricular subjects like Art (6.1.2, Table 6.5), implying the principles of a *visible* (Bernstein, 1996) pedagogy (3.4.1.5). In Nova Spectrum class, the permeable barriers to accessing curricular knowledge equally and the non-hierarchical relations of the students (6.1.4, Table 6.11) indicated an *invisible* (Bernstein, 1996) pedagogy for the students with SEN (3.4.1.5).

- Participating in collaborative activities as leaders or co-constructors, and working towards the accomplishment of shared goals. Thus, communality characterises the relations between the students, for example, in the Nova Spectrum class, wherein the Steiner pedagogy was based on developmental and cognitive psychology which, posits an autonomous course of acquiring knowledge in the learner within an *integrated type* (Bernstein, 1977) of curriculum with open and flexible content of knowledge (3.4.1.4). As there were no firm boundaries in the academic classification of the students, they all had equal access and shared the production of knowledge (6.1.4, Table 6.11).

3. Social activities which promote sharing with peers, social responsibility, cultural awareness, and self-awareness.

- Participation in extra-curricular social activities where students share social concerns and engage in activities that bring focus on cultural awareness into the social side of their development. This was represented in the Nova Spectrum class where the students participated in progressive pedagogic practices that enabled them to learn both about themselves and about others around them (6.1.2, Table 6.3) learning for example through Art about their inner world and the outside world (3.5.3).

- Social activities that enable all students to expand their social skills and develop sensitivity to social and environmental issues. Practical contributions to shared tasks; equal roles and responsibilities for the accomplishment of classroom work as *interactive participants* (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) (3.2.1). This was seen in the Nova Spectrum class (6.1.2, Table 6.3), where interactive activities with social intentions were promoted, and cross-curricular activities were implemented (3.5.2).

- Involvement in social and educational activities that enable students to identify their strengths and weaknesses and understand their position in relation to others. Developing self-awareness through collective activities enables students to engage with and address their weaknesses. This was exemplified in the pedagogy of the Nova Spectrum classroom, where the aim of creative learning activities, according to Steiner (1995) is to enhance contact with the self and with others (3.5.3). In this environment, pupil discourse revealed that the students with SEN expressed positive self-perception and peer togetherness (6.1.3, Table 6.8).

- Practices that synthesise the individual and the social. As Steiner's (1996) pedagogy showed in the Nova Spectrum class, the student develops consciousness by participating in both individual and social processes. The combination of both aspects in the whole-child education (3.5.2) was embodied in the production of material culture of the classroom (6.1.2, Table 6.6) and the teacher's student-centred pedagogy (6.1.2, Table 6.3) and delineated by the flexibility and openness of an environment with no distinct boundaries between the academic and social positioning of the students with SEN (6.1.4).

- Activities and practices that enable students to develop intimate relations in order to sympathise with the problems of others or to give critical feedback so that alternative solutions can be considered. The formal and informal pupil discourse in Nova Spectrum (6.1.3, Tables 6.9/6.10), showed that the nature of the collective and social activities within the weak boundaries of this classroom between student/student and student/teacher relations (6.1.4) and the social values of the environment as part of its *hidden curriculum* (Skelton, 1997) (3.4) motivated the students to share their

concerns and problems with their peers and the teacher through their own individual expression in talk (3.3.3 and 6.1.3, Table 6.8).

4. Autonomy, heterogeneity, and students' active participation in knowledge production and delivery.

- When students experience the physical space of the classroom as their own, they feel confident in communicating their ideas, interests, common plans, and concerns. An open learning space where different cultural and social semiotic stimuli interact. This was exemplified in the Panoptical Heights class, where the students were also involved in the production of the material culture, i.e. posters, drawings, which implicitly communicated the position of the classroom at the midpoint regarding the principles of classification and framing (6.1.4, Table 6.11).This was also evident in Nova Spectrum where the classroom space was shared between the teacher and the students (6.1.2, Tables 6.6/6.7), which implicitly suggested the tendency towards weaker classification and framing (6.1.4, Table 6.11). In both classes, the strength or weakness of the boundaries delineated the degree of social control and power relations between the students and the teachers and how they experienced their classroom (3.4.1.4).

- Enabling the students to bring out their own voices, interests, ideas, concerns, through the production of work based on their idiosyncratic, heterogeneous forms of expression. Heterogeneity in work was exemplified in Nova Spectrum class, where there was weak framing in terms of the students' control over the presentation of their work (3.4.1.4 and 6.1.2, Table 6.6). Their interests and individual voices were communicated through the ideational and interpersonal meta-functions of their work (3.2.3 and 6.1.2, Table 6.7).

Sub-question two asked

2. *Which forms of pedagogy brought **obstacles** to the successful inclusion of students with SEN in the specific schools?*

The obstacles that the pedagogies of the classrooms in Sunny Hill, and Panoptical Heights tended to bring to the inclusion of the students with SEN seemed to involve:

1. Teacher-centred, hierarchically-based pedagogic practices highlighting the academic rather than the social objectives of pedagogy.

- Teacher-centred approaches, with emphasis on the academic rather than the social side of pedagogy achieved by grouping the students by ability (6.1.1, Table 6.1), by the teachers' pedagogy in emphasising more individualised and competitive activities rather than collective activities with

a common target (6.1.2, Table 6.3) and by more academically driven rather than socially oriented production of classroom displays (6.1.2, Table 6.7).

- Transfer of a lack of cultural awareness and respect for diversity through non-prioritisation of cross-cultural activities. This was exemplified in Chapter 6 where pedagogic practices in both schools were less flexible and stricter, with emphasis on the academic attainments of the students and less on social awareness of diversity. The distinct barriers in the content knowledge of the curriculum were evident in the strong classification and framing principles (6.1.4, Table 6.11) and in the lack of recontextualizing knowledge about the outside world in inclusive ways that corresponded to the students' diverse needs (3.4.1.3).

- Rigid approaches to supporting and addressing the learning goals of students with SEN. Although in both schools, the support for the students with SEN might be considered systematic, the grouping by ability (6.1.1, Table 6.1) and the teachers' pedagogy involved non-interactive or dialogic pedagogic practices (6.1.2, Table 6.3), so the students with SEN expressed poor self-perception and low aspirations (6.1.3, Table 6.8). The rigidity of approaches was embodied in their expression and representation through non-flexible modes, i.e. grouping by ability, individualised tasks instead of peer collaboration (3.2.1).

- Hierarchical interactions developed in settings when knowledge was transmitted mainly by the class teacher to the non-SEN students and by the TA to the SEN-students. This was evidenced in Chapter 6, where grouping the students with SEN by ability (6.1.1) and their seating arrangements (6.1.2, Table 6.2) inhibited interaction with the teacher and enhanced more interaction with the TA, suggesting the strong boundaries that distinguished the two groups, the SEN and non-SEN students (3.4.1.4), the recontextualisation and relocation of educational policies in the ways special provision was provided to the SEN students (3.4.1.3) and the role of symbolic control in reproducing the boundaries between the two categories of students (3.4.1.2).

2. Engagement of the teacher and the students in pedagogic practices with monomodal and monologic rather than multimodal and dialogic characteristics.

- Transmission of curriculum through a mainly monomodal communicative medium which inhibited the acquisition of knowledge by the students with SEN. This was mainly exemplified in Sunny Hill classes, where the teachers used traditional and less interactive methods of teaching (6.1.2, Table 6.4) emphasising a more traditional and less progressive pedagogy (3.4.1.5) and the tendency towards a stronger degree of classification and framing (3.4.1.4).

- Monologic discourse or dialogic discourse with monologic elements, promoted through educational activities inhibiting the active participation of the students with SEN and positioning them as listeners and passive learners. This was evidenced in Ch.6, regarding the teacher's pedagogy (6.1.2, Table 6.3) and the interactions between the students (Table 6.5), which tended to be non-interactive and more individualised with emphasis on the accomplishment of specific academic targets implying the symbolic control of the teacher over the ways of distributing knowledge (3.4.1.2).

3. The teacher's ineffective educational responses to the students' diverse needs conspired to subvert any benefits from inclusive provision.

- When the teacher's negative interaction with students with SEN prevented the development of an awareness of their social needs. This was exemplified in the students' with SEN seating arrangements (6.1.2, Table 6.2) and the teacher's non-interactive pedagogy, creating a hierarchy of authority in teacher/student relations, (6.1.2, Table 6.3). The pedagogic discourse produced communicated certain forms of power associated with the hierarchical pedagogic relations of the teachers/students (3.4.1.3).

- When the teachers were unfamiliar with, and poorly trained in, effectively responding to diverse needs, they tended to be defensive and impose rules in their classrooms that made the 'different' academic and social behaviour of students with SEN more visible. This was exemplified in Sunny Hill, year 6 and Panoptical Heights, where the regulative discourse underlined the teachers' authority through explicit and authoritative rules (3.4.1.4). Evidence for this is presented in Chapter 6, where in Sunny Hill year 6 class and Panoptical Heights year 5, the teachers used the students' seating arrangements (6.1.2, Table 6.2) to monitor their behaviour and performance and through their pedagogies promoted more individualised and less interactive tasks which isolated the SEN students from any communication with other peers (6.1.2, Table 6.3).

- The grouping by ability (6.1.1, Table 6.1) and the seating arrangements by ability (6.1.2, Table 6.2) implied homogeneous classroom teaching, so that the class teacher was hardly aware of individual learning needs and there was little cooperation between the class teacher and the TA in planning and teaching common activities to which the students with SEN could actively contribute. This also implied the pedagogies tended towards stronger classification and framing in terms of teacher/teacher relations (6.1.4, Table 6.11), suggesting that the boundaries in these classrooms for the communication between the teacher and the TA were distinct, presupposing a hierarchy in their communication (3.4.1.4). As Dyson (2001:25) noted 'the more their educational responses emphasise what learners have in common, the more they tend to overlook what separates them'.

- The students in mixed ability tasks developed poor quality communication as they were constrained by the teacher's monitoring, pace and rules. This was exemplified in the authoritative ways the practices were implemented and delivered by the teachers to the students (6.1.2, Table 6.3/6.4), implying the regulation of the students' consciousness and behaviour through specific rules (3.4.1.4).

4. The overwhelming emphasis on pedagogic targets and good behaviour marginalised the students with SEN from the *common* classroom and curriculum.

- Peer learning inhibited by ability-differentiated tasks which socially marginalised the students with SEN. This was described in Chapter 6, when the grouping by ability (6.1.1, Table 6.1) and the seating arrangements of the students with SEN (6.1.2, Table 6.2) and the engagement of the students in individualised tasks isolated them socially from any interaction with their peers (6.1.2, Table 6.5). This practice revealed the social asymmetries and power hierarchies reproduced in these classrooms due to the hidden curriculum of each classroom (3.4).

- The physical marginalisation of the students with SEN in the classroom inhibited their social interactions and their informal talk. This was evidenced in Chapter 6, where the students' with SEN (6.1.2, Table 6.8) showed poor self-perception regarding their social positioning. Moreover, this was exemplified in the SEN students' informal conversations (6.1.2, Table 6.10) where the same hierarchies in the relations of the students were reproduced through their talk, implying that the various pedagogic discourses distribute forms of specific social relations and consciousness as they integrate specific student identities (3.4).

- Socialisation of the students mainly in the playground and not in the classroom. This was described in Chapter 6 where in the students' informal conversations (6.1.2, Table 6.10), the students with SEN were positioned as passive learners and participants in their classroom interactions, whereas in the playground, non-academic issues, such as friendships and rules of team games were discussed. This implied the tendency towards stronger classification and framing, both at organisational and interactional level in the classroom, compared to the playground, where boundaries in the communication of the students were less visible (3.4.1.4). Moreover, the internal persuasive discourse as part of the verbal socialisation of the students in the playground was evident in the age-related themes discussed in their informal conversations (3.3.3).

The third sub-question to emerge was

*3. What **best practices** for the inclusion of students with SEN could be identified in the specific schools?*

The study identified prevalence of the 'school voice' in Sunny Hill and Panoptical Height Schools, a formal voice reflecting the institutionally and nationally set targets of each educational activity, articulated and promoted through the formal curriculum as described in Ch.6 through the classification of students by ability (section 6.1.1, Table 6.1), the semiotic evidence of the classrooms (6.1.2), where the individual seating arrangements of the students with SEN implied a hierarchy of ability and excluded these students from the mainstream ability classification (Table 6.2). The local voice in each classroom tended to reflect the formal voice of the teacher and the formal voices of the students. This was evident in the teacher's pedagogy (Table 6.3), suggesting a visible and traditional pedagogical approach (3.4.1.5) and the teacher's use of pedagogical resources (Table 6.4), which seemed to place emphasis on the educational rather than on the social aspect of pedagogy. (*Voice*, refers to the expression of structured meanings derived either from experience or from social agencies, or from the interaction of experience and social agencies that reflect a specific ideology- Kostouli, 2005). The teacher's voice also prevailed in the competitive nature of activities which inhibited the collaboration of the students from mixed ability groups (Table 6.5). The teacher's voice was also evident in the classroom decoration (Table 6.6) and the content and form of the classroom displays were often teacher-oriented (Table 6.7).

In my opinion, the best practice for the inclusion of students with SEN could be identified as one that places 'the individual child ...at the centre of education' (Gill & Thomson, 2012: viii). In Nova Spectrum School, the local voice of the classroom was allowed to emerge through the informal voices of the teacher and the students, and this reflected their knowledge, interpretations, previous knowledge, and experiences; a synthesis of voices which incorporated the personal, family, school, and social culture. In this classroom, with its progressive pedagogy (3.4.1.5), the informal voices of the teacher and the students emerged through practices that encouraged them to engage in constructive collaborative teaching and learning, student-centred practices implemented multimodally and dialogically to support different intellectual and emotional needs (6.1.2). Moreover, these person-centred activities encouraged the students with SEN to confidently evaluate their teacher's practices, to actively and equally contribute to the production and transmission of knowledge (6.1.2, Tables 6.3/6.4) and to cultivate their individual skills and personalities (3.5.2).

7.2 Outcomes and suggestions

The study's findings, based on this limited sample, suggest that the diverse needs of SEN students were not supported effectively by the practices of the mainstream schools studied. A shift to more student-centred practices is necessary for this to

happen. If these observations were supported in other classroom settings, it would be necessary to recommend a higher quality of support and training of teachers, collaboration between schools and LEAs with other services to ensure that appropriate provision for children with SEN could be delivered. Social learning takes place through school practices and the relationships facilitated in their classrooms by teachers when delivering officially formulated learning programmes can certainly impact at the level of the social relations shaped by the dynamics of group and class. Inclusive policies will open up new perspectives regarding issues of quality and progress for the education of children with special needs. Educational agencies need to minimise social exclusion, eliminate social discrimination and promote social justice. According to Cottrell, (2007:27) 'inclusion is a philosophy', not a practice:

> Segregating children in special classes or programmes denies these children access to normal experiences. Segregated services have not resulted in adequate education for handicapped students (Gargiulo, 2003, cited in Cottrell, 2007:27)

This criticism arises from the ignoring of diversity. Schools can easily develop their own dominant stereotypical perceptions about diversity under the influence of national regulations concerning academic performance and league tables, which can undermine or even reject the principles of an inclusive society. The excessive emphasis on competition, selection and competence for learning, and assessment through comparing and measuring students, as well as the explicit or implicit institutional recognition of these comparisons by the agents of education, contribute to the social construction of learning disability and consequently, the maintenance of certain practices and situations of social segregation (Cremin & Thomas, 2005). Inclusive education, according to Ainscow (1999) aims to celebrate the differences between students and to see diversity as creative potential, not as a problem looking for a solution. An individual's gender, race, social and cultural origins and economic background should not exercise any influence on the right to freedom, dignity and justice. If all children are entitled to an education of quality, a more democratic spirit needs to guide the educational process to ensure democracy in society. According to Bernstein (1996: 6, 7), delivering the conditions for democratic education in schools requires three interrelated rights:

- The right to individual promotion
- The right to social, spiritual, cultural and personal inclusion, which constitutes a condition for the community
- The right of participation in the construction, maintenance and transformation of class, which forms the condition for the practice of citizenship.

The benefits of education can be evaluated according to whether all students receive and enjoy these rights or to the extent that they are unequally distributed. Bernstein's (1996) democratic theory of education implies the need for the development of a democratic school, within the context of the acceptance of diversity. Current educational policies do not seem to incorporate this design, and

according to Warnock (2005) seven years ago, the policy of inclusion needed to be reviewed. The same could be true today. She links her ideas for the organisation of policy and practice for specialised SEN schools to her argument that students 'should be included under the common educational project, not that they should be included under one roof.' (p.37). Moreover, an earlier survey of SENCOs revealed that factors such as lack of training, reduced funding, lack of professional external agencies, may hinder the successful implementation of inclusive educational policies (NUT, 2003). The social policy of the European Union, which often reiterates the discussions of the previous 50 years concerning educational, vocational and social inclusion (Wedell, 2005), indicates that the problems identified then, still exist (Harry 2005; Curcic, 2009). Inclusion is not just an idea or a political decision, but a process and an outcome, which, according to the Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE, 2008) includes:

- equitable evaluation of all students
- increased participation and reduced exclusion from cultures, curricula and communities of local schools
- reorganisation of the cultures, policies and practices in schools so that students respond to diversity at local level
- removing barriers to the learning and participation of all students, not just those belonging to the category with SEN
- reporting on efforts made to eliminate these barriers
- accepting the right to education of all pupils in their area
- emphasising the role of school for the development of sociability and building of values
- encouraging mutual relationships between schools and communities
- recognising that participation in education is an aspect of integration in society.

My research project was interested to discover how the voices of children themselves can have substance and whether these voices together with school voices can be collated and synthesised to identify what is called the 'local culture' of each classroom. What the research findings suggested is that the role of the teacher is critical in interactional and collaborative educational practices. The teacher needs not merely to emphasise and prioritise the voices of the students at local level, but to bring out these voices as they gradually develop and to highlight how the voices of children emerge and grow as autonomous entities. This might be characterised by a student clearly expressing a position which acquires meaning through its contrast and synthesis with the formal voice of the school.

Finally, *is it feasible to implement interactive teaching in schools where curriculum commitments tend to be nationally imposed as predetermined activities?* This investigation's answer could be positive under certain conditions. Dialogic teaching is possible; on the basis of cultural change and a genuine critical stance to practices where teacher voice is prioritised. If the dominant voice transmitted through the school curriculum is uncritically accepted, there can be no dialogic teaching. Teachers can teach interactively and dialogically when they choose to engage with

the whole range of voices instantiated in school practices, giving priority to local voices and thus, providing the possibility for the weaker voices of students to be articulated with confidence. This obviously has important implications for children. This study showed that the intermingling of voices and the emphasis on the local culture of the classroom not only promotes knowledge but also pleasure.

7.3 Contribution to Knowledge

This study offers a holistic description of the kind of environment which is conducive to supporting inclusive class teaching from the point of view of stakeholders, particularly SEN children, and how far the physical as well as psychological environments contribute to positioning and attitudes. The identification of the forces that included or excluded the students with SEN in the specific mainstream classrooms aimed to generate more detailed awareness of these issues and the extent to which positive pedagogical features which do contribute to inclusion can be introduced into the practice of existing teachers, possibly through teacher-training. What seemed to dominate in Sunny Hill and Panoptical Heights was the political force of rules and regulations, the 'system-centred' (Power-deFur & Orelove, 1997:92) practices rather than the 'process for human flourishing' (Gill & Thomson, 2012:5) and the social well-being of each child. There is a major concern as to whether the 'Every Child Matters' agenda can be implemented by pedagogies which advocate 'whole person' education. Another concern is the need not to penalise students with SEN in mainstream classrooms because of their diversity but to enable them to individually grow.

> Often personal development works best when there are degrees of harmonisation with wider social narratives. For instance a teacher concerned to make 'Every Child Matters' a reality and implement inclusive pedagogy would work with such grains of those societal narratives centring on justice and equality. (Goodson & Gill, 2011:151)

What I have learned from my research is that more radical, humanistic, child-centred approaches could provide guidance and space for children to expand spiritually, emotionally, and cognitively. Therefore, supporting the need for implementing more child-related pedagogy is synonymous with promoting the wholeness of their existence. As Steiner (1995:125)pointed out, 'If a whole is divided in a certain way, what is the amount of the part?' and in this case, *who can decide whether it's best to place more value on the educational and less on the social and spiritual side of children's development?* Steiner's reference to the conceptualisation of division, gives the answer:

> I start from the part, and find out how often the part is contained in the whole: then the division is not a separation into parts, but a measurement. Then division...will soon cease to be something in the nature of merely formal calculation...and will become connected with life. (ibid, p.126)

As this study showed, the whole world of students is divided into separate parts as they develop different identities within their environment. Their environment positions them according to their needs and selects specific ways to cater for them, through their labelling and a homogeneous approach which aims to 'measure' their potential and to decide about their position in the hierarchy. However, as Gill and Thomson (2012:7) observe, the idea of implementing alternative approaches to the integration of students with SEN needs to 'serve certain ends of society' which incorporate democratic thinking, cultural awareness, equality in education, and individual development; in this way, a 'human-centred' (ibid, p.2) education is fostered that supports the academic, social and personal advancement of students. The stance of human-centred education is to convey to students their equal right to education and to enable them to expand the qualities of their personality. Future government planning a reform of the education provision for students with SEN needs to shift from a system-centred approach that mediates a negative hidden curriculum, highlighting the authority of the teacher and the integration of students with labels in predetermined practices, towards more person-centred practices that embrace support from multiple disciplines and plan learning according to the specific weaknesses and strengths of each student (Power-deFur & Orelove, 1997). The person-centred pedagogic approach requires students, families, teachers and professionals to collaborate and share common goals, to implement the best educational practice that is sensitive to the diverse needs of students, values their potential and encourages them and their families by emphasising more their abilities and less their disabilities.

In the meantime, there are lessons to be learned from the Steiner system of democratic and collaborative management by teachers (rather than a Head and a hierarchy), which in itself is an example to students of equal voices, equal value; exchanges or collaboration with Steiner and mainstream teacher-training might open young teachers up to aspects of social education which might otherwise be ignored.

7.4 Limitations

The findings of this small-scale study provide evidence about the cultures of four particular classrooms and their impact on the academic and social inclusion of students with SEN. When disseminated, the specific findings could raise the awareness of teachers and schools involved about the need for a more student-centred approach and more collaborative and constructive social relations. The focus on emerging student voices aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of their views and experiences. Therefore, teachers' background, ideologies, views and experiences of pedagogy were not studied to the extent that might have more fully delineated the quality of their impact and influence over students. In the different cultures of different classrooms, teachers' experiences and approaches will vary. Further exploration of the teachers' ideological positions might have produced more information about ways in which teaching practices could be reformed and become more effective.

Another limitation of this study is that the number of students with SEN in each classroom was quite small and consequently the data might have been relatively limited in terms of the dynamics of the teacher/student and student/student interactions. Furthermore, the recording of videos in classrooms, for which I was not given permission by the schools, could possibly have added some more semiotic information about the meaning making through non-verbal behaviour of both students and teachers. The use of video could also possibly have enabled the teachers to become more aware of their attitudes towards students and might have helped to improve their teaching skills or approaches to behavioural management. The introduction of a more person-centred approach in their practices, through the use of video, might have found a way to become more integrated into their classroom management. Finally, a closer look to particular differences in the SEN pupils in terms of their academic and social skills would have provided more evidence about the kind of educational provision that might be most suitable.

7.4.1 My journey as a researcher and the Steiner School

At the heart of this study lies an interest in revealing pedagogies, which nourish the whole child through student-centred and creative practices and discourses. My personal and professional background in the field of special educational needs in Greece and my continuous interaction with other special needs teachers, children with SEN and their parents made me realise that their experiences of schooling and the educational system are not always positive. Although the intention of the educational system is to promote equity and equality for students with SEN, this is not always managed effectively and results in creating less inclusive conditions in order to cater for the diverse needs of students with SEN. My presence as a researcher in the two mainstream and one Steiner primary classrooms enabled me to explore the factors and conditions associated with specific pedagogies with more or less effective ways of including the students with SEN in mainstream education. My immersion in and systematic analysis of the data enabled me to compare different pedagogies and discourses as they naturally emerged from the observations, interviews and visual displays in specific classrooms.

The data from the Steiner classroom developed in me a positive reaction to the principles and ethos of the Steiner school, as it promoted a wealth and breadth of educational practices (Masters, 2005) that could respond -in flexible, but creative ways- to the emotional and academic needs of all the students. My 'positionality' (Wellington, 2000:43) towards the Steiner educational philosophy and the development of more inclusive conditions for the students with SEN was realised through the process of reflexion. According to Lisle (2010:41)

> Reflective practice... is seen as a mechanism for controlling one's own learning -self-reflexive learning- leading to self-discovery, and use of the knowledge learned to activate changes at a higher level of power; in that it aims to put pressure on policy makers, thus inform policy and thus can be seen as a form of self-management...

The intention of my reflexive positioning was to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each classroom I observed in terms of how inclusive their learning and teaching practices were for the students with SEN and to allow the data to show any space for improvement. My ideological position towards an educational system that provides practically and inclusively equal opportunities to the students with SEN made it more difficult to sustain the subjective-objective dualism in looking at the Steiner classroom and to capture as objectively as possible the Steiner pedagogic approach to education. The values and beliefs of the students and the teacher in the Steiner setting about the world and their positive perspectives about the others around them put them in sharp contrast with the other two mainstream schools. In the two mainstream schools, the tendency of the students with SEN to have a more negative self-perception and poor self-esteem, and the teachers' voice on the necessity for involving more collaborative, emotional and social-driven activities in the curriculum for the students with SEN exemplified and underlined the need to improve the pedagogic approaches for the students with SEN. By contrast, the caring attitude of the Steiner classroom teacher to the needs of all of the students and the sharing between the students with and without SEN in terms of their interests and concerns about nature and life enabled me to visualise how a more inclusive pedagogic approach could support the needs of the students with SEN better. My awareness and recognition of the impact of my personal positioning towards the Steiner philosophy of education concerning the interpretation of the study's findings was counterbalanced by systematic and rigorous record-taking in my field notes and the triangulation of different qualitative methods. Furthermore, the grounded theory approach allowed the emerging data to reveal the similarities and differences between the different pedagogies and discourses and the different degrees of inclusion represented in the four classrooms in the three schools.

Suggestions for future research that could promote more inclusive and effective pedagogic approaches to the education of students with SEN are suggested in the following section.

7.5 Ideas for future research

While the methodology of this study shed light on the practices that facilitate or hinder the inclusion of the students with SEN in four specific classrooms, and which affect their positioning and identification, *what further research could contribute to implementing an effective pedagogic approach embracing the diversity of students and fostering personal and social progress?*

As the communication of the students with SEN in each classroom was investigated holistically, taking into account the verbal and non-verbal modes of meaning-making, the employment of *narrative encounters* (Goodson and Gill,2011:151) could function as an alternative or complementary qualitative approach to understanding students' and teachers' experiences in the specific contexts within which they evolve intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, socially. *Narrative pedagogy* could work as the basis for intervention in particular schools for encouraging both educational and

personal development through *personal* and *collective narratives* (ibid, p.151) that enable meanings to emerge from ways in which people see themselves and perceive their relationships with their communities.

The analysis of the situated verbal interactions of the students with SEN produced valuable data about their positioning in relation to teachers and peers, but an analysis of precisely who dominated in student dialogues requires a more detailed examination of the verbal material. Further research using the taped material could analyse the pauses; how teachers handle pauses, and other factors such as the waiting time between the contributions of the participants within the dialogues (see Cazden, 2001). Such analysis could provide information as to which students were dominant, less dominant or simply listeners. This study showed a way of approaching the dialogue based on an understanding of the interweaving of voices and their interplay, rather than simply an account of the sequence of interlocutors.

More information needs to be generated about appropriate teacher training for the management of effective inclusion; this was identified there need to be changes in attitudes towards students with SEN and approaches to their needs. Future research could also adopt a longitudinal qualitative case study approach to discover how, through teachers' and peers' attitudes and educational practices, the positioning and identification of students with SEN can be transformed across time and planned educational development. This type of study could provide a deeper understanding of the contradictory positions within the complexity of inclusion and might offer constructive ideas for change.

Final comment

The approach to educating students with SEN in mainstream classes needs to be reconsidered. Schools are subject to government policies, and an education agenda that promote performance, academic achievement, success in examinations, and the school's ability to meet targets and thereby ensure future funding and resources. However, the implementation of a new, person-centred pedagogic approach is a challenging strategy which depends on schools' capacity for taking risks. This study shows that there needs to be a change in policies which plan education based on the weaknesses rather than the strengths of students with SEN. The voices of the students in this study arguably seek change, the need for their environment to develop greater awareness of their individuality, to breach boundaries and to embrace difference, collaboration, and to respect the human rights of all students.

I leave the last word to May, a girl with SEN from the Nova Spectrum School:

'We are all friends in this school'

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: FIELD NOTES

1. Field note, Bob's class 4/5, Nova Spectrum School

9.00 In the classroom 9 July 2010

Some children are inside the classroom and they move around the classroom and talk to each other. The teacher sits at his desk and keeps some notes on a piece of paper. Two girls are sitting and chatting with each other at the front desk while two boys are sitting at the second row of the desks and one of them holds a red flute in his hand and chat with another boy that sits at his desk. Some other children are coming in the classroom. Two other boys are singing and they laugh with each other about the song. A girl comes to the sink next to me and she holds a glass of water where she has put two flowers in it and she tells me that she forces the flowers to survive while she is smiling and is looking at me. I laugh and then she tells the same thing to two other classmates. A boy comes close to her and asks her what she is doing. At the same time the teacher asks the students what time they have their performance tonight. A girl tells Bob that they start at 19.00 and they finish at about 21.00. Then the teacher comes close to me and tells me that they have to practice their words for their play next week. Some students are trying their costumes for the play at the side of the classroom. Students stand around the costumes, chat and show each other the costumes. Bob chooses the costumes for each student depending on the role and then each student wears the costume. Now the teacher tells all students to sit down because it is time to start. The students sit down and the teacher that stands in front of the black board starts to sing quietly. A boy goes to the teacher and asks him something and then he goes out of the classroom. Then the teacher goes out for a while and holds the door. He then goes back to his desk and he searches for his keys. He then comes to me and he tells me to follow him downstairs because he wants to get something form the central office and he does not want to leave me alone with the students in the classroom. So I stand up and I go with him downstairs to take a folder. Then we go up the stairs again and we head to the classroom. The teacher sits in his chair in front of the blackboard. He starts shouting out the names of the students to check who is in today. Children are sitting quietly at their desks. Students stand up behind their chairs and they keep quiet. "Good morning class 4 and 5" the teacher says students and they start making some movements with their hands and legs while they are all saying their morning pray. After that the teacher starts singing the song of "cuckoo" in the classroom. All students with Bob are standing and singing the song. Now Bob tells the girls to sing 'cuckoo' while the boys are singing the rest of the song. Then Bob tells boys to sing 'cuckoo' and girls to keep on singing the rest of the song. Now that the students and the teacher have finished with the first song they now start to sing another one 'soldier would you marry me'. Some students at the back of the classroom make some movements while they sing the song. They hit their feet on the floor following a specific rhythm and they move their hands depending on the lyrics of the song. When they finish singing, Bob tells them that they will now try their costumes and some students shout and seem excited and laugh when they hear that. Now teacher tells students to sit down. Students chat with each other. Bob gives each student his/her costume. Bob puts each costume over the clothes of each student. Now the teacher tells students to sit down after they get their costumes and make some reading from their books in order to keep quiet while others are standing up and wearing their costumes. A boy is coming to teacher's desk and puts his book on teacher's desk. He then goes back and sits at his desk. The rest of the students stand up and go beside the teacher and the costumes. The teacher and the students choose together their costumes. A boy seems that he does not like his black costume and he looks at me. He finally puts it on and he carefully looks at it. Some students sit down and read their books while others are chatting with each other. Now the teacher puts some golden bands around their heads. Most of the students are chatting with each other while they are sitting at their desks, practicing their words and reading their books. The teacher has finished giving the costumes to the students. The teacher sits back to his chair. Then he tells a student to go close to him. Bob is looking for a safety pin to put on his camisole. Now the teacher tells students to sit at their desks, be quiet and listen to him at every stage of practicing the play. He gives some instructions to students of how they will move on the stage and before and after that. Bob tells students to stand up and line up in front of the door to go upstairs to the gymnasium for practicing their words for the play.

10.00 Gymnasium

All students and the teacher go to the gym where the play is going to take place next week. Students will practice their words today. All students are sitting at a bench on the left side of the gym. I get a chair and I sit in front of the stage. The students sit down and hold some book to read while some of their classmates are behind the stage and prepare their words. The teacher gives students the books in order to keep quiet while others are practicing their words. Bob gives instructions to students that

stand on the stage about how to move and how to express the words. He then turns off the main lights and waits for the students to come at the front to turn on the lights. Now the students come out to the stage and they move slowly towards Bob. He then tells a girl that sits with her classmates on the bench to move and sit further away because she makes noise while talking. The girl stands up and sits further away on the floor. Bob keeps on giving instructions to students on stage how to move their hands and their heads in this specific scene and how to move their bodies when they leave the stage. Now Bob tells the same students to go back again and practice their words and movements again. Then Bob tells the rest of the students to come on stage and go backstage to practice their words and play their parts on stage. All students move on stage and they practice their words with the help of Bob. Bob organises the lights and give advice to students when they do not remember some words or they do not shout out their words in order for the audience to listen to them during the play.

10.45
Bob has just finished practicing with his students and he seems very tired. We leave the gym and I tell him that he looks very tired. He tells me that it is true because they have done many practices with the students and still could not recall some of their words. So they all feel stress about next week's performance. All students go out of the gym and we all go upstairs to the classroom. Bob tells students to take their snacks from their bags and line up in front of the door to take a break. Students take their costumes off and they hang them where the rest of the costumes are. Then they go to their bags at the back of the classroom and get their snacks. Then they all wait at the door and Bob opens the door and we all go to the playground.

10.55-11.20 Break time
Teachers take a cup of coffee and their snack and they stand in the playground. They talk to each other and they keep an eye on children while they move on the playground. All the children from different year 2 and on play on the same playground. They play quietly while they run, sing and walk on the playground. Students from year 4, 5 are on the playground and play quietly with each other or I could see some girls walk next to each other chatting. Teachers seem relaxed when they are on the playground and talk with each other and laugh. Bob comes and talks to me and we go to the kitchen to take a cup of tea. Then we go outside again and stand with the other teachers and talk. Another teacher asks me about my project and we also talk about the financial crisis in European countries. Children walk in front of us and chase each other on the playground. After we all finish with the tea Bob shouts 'year 4, 5' and children go upstairs and wait fro Bob to come. Then we all go to the classroom.

11.25
Students are back to their classroom again. They are all sitting down and they chat with each other. The teacher sits at his desk and looks at some orange notebooks. He then stands up and goes to the black board. He takes a smaller black board and he puts it next to the big one. He erases most of the things he has left from previous lessons on the board by using a sponge. He also erases some things he has left on the small black board. Bob says students that they are going to work on long divisions again. They will go through another long division today in order to practice more on that. He first tells students that they know the times table of 12. He takes the chalk and writes a division on the small black board. He then tells students that they are going to do that step by step in order to remember all the steps in the process. They all start shouting out the words "divide, multiply, subtract, bring down" while the teacher shows the sequence of the operations on the board. The teacher has the division on the board and asks students what they are doing all the way through. 'What do you divide?' Bob asks the students and some of them raise their hands and tell him their answers. 'Where do you put the 12?' Bob asks the students and some students tell him that they put it under 15 and they subtract it. 'Write the date in your books and start please', Bob tells the students. There is another teacher in the classroom now and Bob tells students that she could help them if they encounter any problem with their exercises. The supply teacher goes to two girls who raise their hands because they need some support with their exercises. She stands above the head of the first girl and she explains to her how to solve the exercise. Then she tells the second girl at the front row and explains her how to divide. Bob keeps on writing some exercises on the big black board. Bob uses a red chalk to write the exercises on the big black board and a yellow and pink chalk to write his

example on the small board. Students are copying the exercises in their notebooks. Some of them are chatting with each other. Bob gives the supply teacher a paper with the solutions to the exercises. She then takes the paper and she goes around the tables to help students who struggle with their work. A boy takes his notebook and goes straight to Bob who sits at his desk. He sees his exercises and he tells him to try again number 3. After that the boy goes back to his seat and works on his exercise. Another girl waits next to the boy to talk to Bob who sits at his desk. She then shows Bob her exercises in her notebook. The supply teacher sits next to a girl at the third row and she explains to her how to solve her exercises. Bob keeps on helping the girl who stands next to her. Bob tells her to remember the sequence of the words 'divide, multiply, subtract, bring down'. Then he shows her how to follow the sequence in the exercise that she tries to solve. The girl listens to him. Some children work on their exercises and they raise their hands to ask for help. The supply teacher now moves to the front row and she helps a girl who has trouble solving her exercises. She sits next to the girl at the same desk and she makes some questions to her. She asks her how she could divide a specific number by another one. Bob keeps on explaining the exercises to the same girl who was waiting for him before. Another girl comes to the sink next to me and she drinks some water. Bob stands up and goes to the back row to help Jack with an exercise. He repeats to Jack everything he has done so far step by step in his notebook. The supply teacher stands in front of a student and she then tells students that all the steps are on the small board and they do not look at them. Then Bob asks students if anyone needs help and a boy raises his hand and he shouts 'me'. Then Bob stands above his head and explains him how to bring a number down. He then goes to sit next to a boy at the front row who needs help. He describes all the steps that the student needs to follow for solving the exercise. Two girls come next to me to use the bin to sharpen their pencils. The supply teacher goes to a student in the front row that received help from Bob before. She stands above his head and she explains to him how to bring the number down. Another student goes to Bob and asks his permission to go to the toilet. Bob sits at his desk and writes some numbers in his notebook. The supply teacher moves around and answers the questions of students. She tells a girl who she helped before to answer her how much is '11 times 4' and waits for her answer. After the girl answers her she tells her to divide that and then to multiply it. Then she sits on her knees next to the girl and she keeps on helping the girl. Bob sits at the back row of the desks and helps one of the girls. They review step by step one of the exercises that has in her notebook.

12.05

Bob tells students that it is now long enough and that they would need their best crayons for the next activity. Students sound satisfied and happy as they laugh and chat with each other. 'Please listen' Bob asks students. Bob gives students a piece of white paper and he tells them to draw something from a main lesson. Whatever lesson they like or from the trip they had or the Olympics in Sussex. 'It could be anything from the main lessons you had' Bob says and he also suggests them to put a book under their papers for not putting any crayons on their desks. Bob tells them that they could make a picture on the one side of their papers. Some students are moving around the classroom, talk to each other and laugh. Others have already started to draw their papers. Bob tells them to keep quiet while they are drawing because only then they will think of something to draw. Bob tells a girl to go to his desk to show her something. He tells her that he found something beautiful she has drawn in her drawing book. She looks at it and she smiles while Bob asks her whether she would like to show it to other students. It is a picture of a flower. The girl says ok because some other students keep on asking Bob what they are looking at in the drawing book. He then shows the picture of the girl to the other students in the classroom and all the children make a sound of admiration in the classroom. Then they start clapping their hands and they smile to the girl. The girl puts her hands on her red face because she looks shy and she smiles. She then goes back to her desk. Students are working again on their drawing. They are drawing quietly and some of them keep on chatting quietly at their desks. Bob tells a girl to stand next to him and they start reading a page from a book. He shows her with his finger every line that she reads from the book. He tells her 'to be brave and that she will get them all if she tries'. He then tells her to break down the long words into pieces while she is reading. Bob helps her to break down the word 'succeeded' in order to help her reading it easily. The girl tries to read it. Bob tells her 'it is really good, well done' and he keeps on encouraging her 'that is lovely and well done' while she is going back to her desk. The supply teacher helps another girl to read something from a book. She takes two chairs and puts them at the one side of the classroom, next to the costumes. Then the supply teacher and the student sit next to each other and the girl starts reading

two pages from a book. Some students stand up and they go close to Bob to show him their drawings. Bob praises them for their drawings and tells them 'well done'. Then the students put their drawing books on his desk and return to their desks. Another girl draws something in red and Bob tells her that she could put some more colours on it.

12.30
It is time for the children to have lunch. So they all stand up behind their chairs. Bob stands in front of the blackboard and the supply teacher stands at the back of the classroom. Students say their pray before going to the dining room. They now hold each other's hand in a circle and they sing a short song. Then they all go to the dining room to have lunch.

Reflection
Today I have been with children in the gymnasium while they were practicing their words fro the play next week. I felt really well when Bob invited me to observe them and tell him my impressions. I felt better when he put a chair at the front of the stage where the children were ready to start acting. You feel that they respect you and that they care about what you want to say to them. It was impressive the fact that all children were struggling to act as good as they hoped for and Bob on the other hand was trying to keep them awake of what is going on and that a real audience would be there next week to watch them. He was supportive and tried very hard for children to act better and recall all their words for their play. It was a nice experience because children are very young but on the other hand they are doing whatever they could to succeed. Bob was also very supportive in the way he was choosing the costume for each child, making sure that the costume is in the right size and that it looks good on the child. When there was a problem with the costume he was taking safety pins and was putting them on the costumes of the children. He was caring and he was encouraging children throughout the whole process of preparing the children to practice their words. Children seemed to like what they were doing and they were doing it all together as a group. I did not see any child not being part of this group. They were all laughing and teasing each other before they start practicing and while being backstage, Bob was telling them to keep quiet.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Interview questions for teachers and teaching assistants

1. What does Special Educational Needs mean to you? What counts as SEN in your classroom?
2. How easy would it be for someone that comes for the first time in your classroom to identify which students have special educational needs?
3. How much extra help and assistance do students with special educational needs receive internally (i.e. teaching assistant, extra help from the teacher)?
4. What kind of inclusive education programs do you use in your classroom? Which are the benefits of these programs for students with SEN?
5. How would other children in the classroom know who has special educational needs?
6. What do you believe is the role and responsibilities of a teacher in meeting the needs of students with special educational needs?
7. How do the staff development programmes, if you attend any, could guide and support teachers to try new procedures for students with SEN?
8. What is your approach to curriculum for diverse learners?
9. How often do you put students into groups?
10. Do you think that students with SEN are socially accepted or neglected by other children in the classroom? Which factors do you believe affect their behaviour towards SEN students?
11. Are there any activities in your classroom that promote the interaction of students with SEN and their peers?
12. What kind of special knowledge and skills do you use for helping students with SEN in the classroom?
13. Do most of your classroom activities foster cooperative or individual work?
14. If you could do anything you like in your classroom, what changes would you made for students with SEN?

APPENDIX C: TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEWS

1. Transcribed interview of Bam, teacher of year 6, Panoptical Heights School

Interviewer: I'd like to ask you what does special educational needs mean to you and what counts as special educational needs in your classroom?

Interviewee: Right special educational needs to me means those children who have, who need extra help either because they've got learning problems so they need support to help them with their learning. Or they could have special educational needs because they are gifted and talented. So it's sort of either end of the spectrum really. And both of those sets of children need support either to help them access the curriculum at their own level or obviously to develop them even further and provide challenge for them. In my classroom I've got several children with special needs a young man who's got global developmental delay who has severe learning difficulties. So he obviously needs quite a lot of help and support. We've got a young man with autism who's on the autistic spectrum. So again he needs careful handling to make sure that he's accessing the curriculum at his level. And I've got a girl with dyslexia who needs help and a young man who has periods of epilepsy. So he has small epileptic seizures so he can miss out parts of sentences. So again it's just helping him to make sure that he accesses the works so he can really work at his level. And I've got quite a few of gifted children as well. So it's... we've got a very broad range in the class working from level one up to level six really. So it's a huge range of ability in the classroom which is quite hard to plan for and work with.

Interviewer: Yes, that was my next question how do you differentiate the curriculum for diverse learners?

Interviewee: Well obviously it's quite hard because by the time they get to year 6 of course you really have got the spectrum of ability in there really. So with the very special needs for maths and English we withdraw them from the classroom and they work in a small group working on text at their level. Obviously they just couldn't access the curriculum at the level that the year 6's are working at really. So we have to make sure that they, it's at their level so they can succeed. So we differentiate it that way and then with the top end of the classroom with those working at a higher level then we give them extra challenge then we give them different texts or different tasks to do.

Interviewer: And that happens in numeracy as well because I know that you...

Interviewee: Yes in all lessons really, well the special needs are removed in English and maths, so in literacy and numeracy. But they then work with us in the classroom for topic and all the other foundation subjects as well. But we've got teaching assistant support who will work with those children. And I do quite like to pair children up so that the more able actually help the less able and support, which works quite nicely. Because the children all look after... for example a young man in the class all of the children want to help him and make sure he's okay. So they look after each other which is nice

Interviewer: Yes it is. My next question was what you said before; how do you arrange students in groupings?

Interviewee: sometimes I'll do mixed ability groups sometimes it will be friendship groups sometime we'll have a more able with a less able sometimes it will be all of a similar ability together. I like to do different things really it gives them just a different experience an opportunity. And also helps, helps them to build relationships with other people.

Interviewer: Yes and would you say that most of the times you foster cooperative work or individual work in the classroom?

Interviewee: Mostly again it depends what we're doing really. I mean sometimes it has to be individual work. They have, I have to see what they are actually capable of. But other times it is cooperative work then again it sort of depends what we're doing really at the time. So I like to give them a broad range of experiences.

Interviewer: Alright. Do you think that someone that comes for the first time in your classroom a visitor like me let's say would be easy for her/him to identify which students have special educational needs?

Interviewee: Again I think it depends on the special educational needs really. I mean I'm not, that might be a question I deflect back to you really. Were you able to identify straight away those children who have special educational needs?

Interviewer: Well the thing is that it depends on the signs that you see for the first time in the classroom. Like for example the role of teaching assistant, you easily identify two people in the classroom. Are there any other signs that someone else may identify?

Interviewee: You may see that the children are they are being focused on aren't they really? And you might see that the questioning is different. So I would ask a question generally but then I might specifically ask a question to that individual child at their level so they can understand what's going on. Or the curriculum sort of directed at that particular child so that they can understand it. Sometimes it's quite a difficult concept so that would have to be simplified for the child who needed that and you would probably see that when you came into the classroom.

Interviewer: Maybe different activities

Interviewee: Different activities going on

Interviewer: Well if you stay with children, yes for a long time you can see that

Interviewee: Yes you can see that

Interviewer: And I'd like to ask you about the role and responsibilities of a teacher in a classroom for meeting the needs of students that struggle with their lessons. What would be the role or the responsibilities?

Interviewee: Well the responsibilities obviously that every child needs to be able to succeed and be able to access what's going on in the classroom. So you provide lots of different learning, experiences, give the child support where necessary, making sure that they are not left alone to frown to struggle so that... that they all access the whole curriculum at a level that they can and to develop and to make progress really. So they have to be able, obviously, we want them to enjoy what they are doing so to make it fun, to make it interactive, to provide different opportunities. So to make visual opportunities, and oral opportunities, so they can do things as well. Just so that we're creating them equal... equality of opportunity really, but also making sure that they are coping and that they are not left alone to struggle.

Interviewer: What you're saying now is right because I could see in your classroom that you're trying too hard and you are using different practices and that makes the

lesson more you know more interesting for students with diverse needs. But the thing is that this depends on the teacher each time. So what kind of skills and special knowledge do you think that the teacher should have in order to help the students?

Interviewee: Well they obviously need to know the children well. They need to know what a child's difficulty is or difficulties are. They need to, if they are inexperienced, obviously ask a more experienced colleague about what will help the student what can, what they can do to put into place to benefit the children's the student's experience. I think experience comes doesn't it the longer you're doing something. But if you're if it's your if you're first into teaching or early into teaching then you need to ask for advice. But I think the key thing is to know the children very well, and know what their needs are and how to meet those. And if they are struggling, ask for advice, because there's always more experienced people who can pass on their advice and help really.

Interviewer: Yeah, you're right. What kind of special resources do you use in your classroom?

Interviewee: Well it depends what again it depends what we're doing. So it depends on the individual child what its needs are with the children who need visual obviously visual equipment to look at. So there'll be pictures, there'll be different books or we might have equipment that they can use so if we are counting, we actually give them money to count with. And we'll give them a board to use or we'll give them cubes to count with. You know again it depends on their needs really. But I do like all children regardless of ability to be able to use... so for example, if we are doing DT; design technology and making things. I like the child to be able to use a saw and a screwdriver. So we all sort of help each other and support each other and do that. I think they just need to be fully included in the classroom really. And just using, I mean we've got plenty of resources for the children to use again depending on their needs.

Interviewer: Alright, now that you're mentioning these resources that you use with particular groups of students, depending on their needs, do you think that this could be reasons for making students with learning needs identifiable to their peers?

Interviewee: I think they, their peers know that the child has learning needs without really seeing them use different resources and I think in a school such as our and many other schools, those children without learning difficulties, support the ones who do and especially in a small school and I think they just support, you know they...there's no name calling or you know they are not picked out as the child that's got special needs ...

Interviewer: Yeah...

Interviewee: You know its all very much an inclusive environment really which we all work on in school to make sure that even though the child has got learning difficulties, special needs, they are part of the school and they're accepted, and so really, I don't feel in this school that if they're using special resources, that's not a...that's not a problem, that's not a great thing really.

Interviewer: How do you think other students will know that in the same classroom there are students with learning needs?

Interviewee: Well they may again know because of di_directed adult support...

Interviewer: Okay...

Interviewee: And if they've got directed resources like you said, if they're used with them, but I really don't think, that's a big issue, they would know, they would just know from the children, I mean we don't say you've got special needs you know there's not...

Interviewer: No labeling...

Interviewee: The chi_theres no labeling, children know don't they, children are acute, they understand

Interviewer: Yes, do you think that staff development programs, if you attend any, would help teachers to use new strategies for meeting the needs of those students?

Interviewee: Well we do have courses available and obviously people attend those if they're able to run a course, we had a course on dyslexia and dyscalculia so math problems so we've had those who've had experts coming to talk to us you know so yes it obviously helps the more you know about any sort of condition the better it is really and staff do take up those opportunity, training opportunities.

Interviewer: And if I may ask, in your meetings let's say with the rest of the staff, do you discuss any problems that you may encounter in the classrooms? Do you share ideas with each other?

Interviewee: Yes, definitely yes...because obv_ as the child moves from class to class, then if the teacher knows about the child then they can, they can help the child as much as possible so yes its shared and we also have individual educational program meetings, IEP meetings where again we get the staff together and also the parents are involved so we discuss with the parents how we are helping the child and what the parents can do at home to help as well so its, its very much an out in the open, conversation really, which is better for the child isn't it?

Interviewer: Yes

Interviewee: The more people that can help the better really...

Interviewer: Exactly, different perspectives...

Interviewee: Absolutely...yes

Interviewer: Different ideas...

Interviewee: Yes...sometimes you can get, what do I do know? And if you've got other people other ideas it just helps ...

Interviewer: So... what's your feeling about the relationships of students with special needs and their peers, do you think that they are socially neglected or they're accepted, they're fully accepted?

Interviewee: Again, I think it depends on the child, because for example the young man here you've been looking at this afternoon, can I say names?

Interviewer: Yes of course...

Interviewee: Yeah, cause Zak...I mean Zak is completely accepted and he makes... he's got lots of friends and they you know there's that really good relationship. With Gareth whose on the autistic spectrum he finds it quite hard, he finds it quite hard to do the socializing bit because that's part of his problem but the children accept him but he is not really within any particular friendship group because he doesn't function within a friend ship group really that's just part of his problem really but he is not that he is pushed to one side he just doesn't work within friendship groups as pa_ as part of the autism...but we don't tend to have any incidences of ...

Interviewer: Bullying...

Interviewee: Bullying...we have in the past had a couple of children from the traveling community who haven't really come through the school with Gareth , Zak and the children with special needs and they don't understand their difficulties so we have had a couple of ti_a occasions where they have been a bit unkind but once we've explained the situation I mean that's, that's been fine...I think, if the children all start together from, as four year olds, then they sort of just grown up with each other really, and you know, help each other...

Interviewer: And as you explain all these to m, that comes to my mind the philosophy behind the practices that this school uses and especially each teacher and I was thinking about... as you said if you want to promote a collaborative environment so that you can...so the children can develop good relationships between them...this is something ...

Interviewee: This is something that we do...

Interviewer: Very important, yeah...

Interviewee: That we do...do it yes, and I think all teachers do here definitely but I can't speak for what other teachers do in other schools but I think if you went into any classroom here you would see that happening...

Interviewer: So would you say that teachers in this school place high value on... academic attainments or on emotional development?

Interviewee: Both...

Interviewer: Both...

Interviewee: Yes, it's the whole child, it's the whole child. The academic attainment doesn't come if the emotional development isn't there is it? You know you need the child to feel safe and secure and to have a learning environment where they can actually succeed, so yes, we want them to make progress for them really but its not the only thing, so we want the child, we want the child, to have to be socially and emotionally developed as well as academic attainment, really, so it's the holistic...it's the whole child that we look at its not just sending out a Math's and English machine at the end of it all you know we want all of...all of that we want them to be rounded individuals really, I think that's important.

Interviewer: Yeah...and how about the letters that you use in order to praise a child's progress or to reward it or sometimes if he has a disruptive behavior in the classroom to punish the child, what happens then?

Interviewee: We tend to do lots of positive praise, obviously lots of verbal praise, well done and lots of encouragement I'm one, I put down very firm boundaries and the

children know what I will accept and what I wont accept and if they're doing what I, you know what I, the rules are in my classroom there's lots of positive praise we get house points, stickers ,extra play times et cetera... et cetera but then if they go beyond the boundaries, that I accept then obviously they have to start paying me some time back or we do the super learner bands, I don't know if you've seen the children with the bands?

Interviewer: Yes...yes I've seen these bands

Interviewer: So they get the band if they're doing what they should be doing and occasionally the band is removed if they haven't done what they should be doing so there are rewards and sanctions but I thinks its just trying to give lots of encouragement, catch them when they're doing good things really rather than emphasizing the bad things which isn't good

Interviewer: Yeah

Interviewee: But I do think they have to have boundaries and children need that to know what you'll accept really...

Interviewer: That's good, before I go to the last question... what do you think are the benefits of all these special practices that you use with students with learning needs, what are the benefits for them?

Interviewee: I just think it gives...so that they can access what they're doing you mean, I just think it...they're included they're not, you know they, they need to be able to do what's happening in the classroom, I think if they're struggling and can't do anything then its going to...they're going to be identified to themselves that they're not able to cope within the classroom and I think that's quite demoralizing and upsetting isn't it, so if you make it that they can access and can do what the rest of the children are doing then that surely, must builds their self esteem, and gives them confidence, and its all about really building their confidence and showing them what they can do, rather than highlighting what they cant do really, so I think all that ...I mean its hard work, I mean obviously, you know to make, everybody able to do something its hard work

Interviewer: It is...

Interviewee: But for me the most important thing is the child and the child is happy, safe, secure and succeeding really, that's why I came into teaching for the child you know to make sure that they are having a good deal really...

Interviewer: Yeah, it's a difficult role

Interviewee: It is, it is...

Interviewer: It is a difficult role...too many responsibilities

Interviewee: Lots to do...lots to do, it would be good if it was just the teaching and the planning but there's lots of other things as well and nowadays I think the children are coming into school with lots more emotional issues as well which can impact on their behaviors so you trying to unpick all of those first before you actually get to the learning child really which is sad, very sad lots of issues at home which is you know a shame isn't it the child comes to school and you just don't know what's happened in the morning and what it ...you know that's sad...

Interviewer: Yes, it's sad, but if you could do anything you like in your classroom without following any guidelines, any curriculum let's say... what changes would you make for students with special needs?

Interviewee: I think they get quite a good deal here anyway, but I suppose they could have much more hand s on stuff so they'd have lot s more sort of learning through play perhaps as it is lower done in the school so its not quite so strict, so if you remove the rigidity of it perhaps you could give them more play opportunities, I know Zak would love to play with Lego all day if you could let him so it could be quite nice if he could have sort of a day making things and playing with toys and stuff like that, so if we could give him more of that opportunity, I mean we do give them that opportunity, but it would be nice to be able to perhaps expand that a little more, and extend that opportunity for him, I mean Gareth would just love to sit and draw all day he'd be quite happy to do that, without putting math and English in there really, he would enjoy that he...

Interviewer: So...

Interviewee: Some more art maybe, more hands on stuff, drama more music, that sort of stuff...

Interviewer: So learning through play...expressions

Interviewer: Learning through play, expression yes...yeah.

Interviewer: That's good. When you said, something last, when you said that in numeracy and literacy you're taking some children out and they work in a group they work with a group of ...the students of this classroom right, not mixed...

Interviewee: No, it's mixed from other classrooms ...

Interviewer: It's mixed...I see...

Interviewee: Yes, and it works very well because they're all working at a similar ability level and...

Interviewer: Yeah, their level is similar...

Interviewee: And it works really well because they, am just trying to find examples of...so they would have you know the big books?

Interviewer: Yeah

Interviewer: So we could...they could all works from a big book and they'll read a story and it's a story that's at their level so you know its something that they can understand and they'll write about the story and they'll do some drama and they'll draw pictures and they do lots of things around the texts and they'll do numeracy at their own level really because with each of the children have been specially chosen because they just cant access the curriculum that the rest of the children are doing within that classroom so I think we've got two from mine, two from Dan's class and then there are three from the year three and four, so it's a small group working here as a withdrawal group, and it works really well, and they're making great progress, which is good.

Interviewer: And they work with their teaching assistant, right?

Interviewee: Yes, but very experienced, highly qualified teaching assistant,... you know she should be a teacher , she's equally as good as any teacher and they get a really good deal, really good, and they're all happy and enjoying it and making progress making very good progress...

APPENDIX D: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Topics of discussion for students without special educational needs

2. Topics of discussion for students with special educational needs

Without SEN

1. Opinions of teacher's perspective of good student in the classroom.
2. Types of support available for all the students in the classroom.
3. Types of activities in the classroom.
4. Favourite classroom activities and reasons for choosing them.
5. Making friends in the classroom; criteria for selecting friends.
6. Types of activities in the playground. Favourite activities; reasons for choice
7. Types of support in the playground (e.g. playground buddies).
8. Ways of resolving disagreements, if any, with other children in the playground.

With SEN

1. Opinions of teacher's perspective of good student in the classroom.
2. Types of support available for all the students in the classroom.
3. Types of activities in the classroom.
4. Favourite classroom activities and reasons for choosing them.
5. Making friends in the classroom; criteria for selecting friends.
6. Types of activities in the playground. Favourite activities; reasons for choice
7. Types of support in the playground (e.g. playground buddies).
8. Ways of resolving disagreements, if any, with other children in the playground.

APPENDIX E: TRANSCRIBED FOCUS GROUP

1. Focus group with students without SEN, Year 4/5, Sunny Hill School: an example

I: **What does your teacher say is a good student?**

F1: Be polite, you don't shout out, you always have a go and...

I: **Anything else?**

F1: That's it.

I: **So what about the rest of you?**

M1: Well like someone who doesn't like play or fiddle, someone who's good at their work and is just a good friend and...

I: **Mmm.**

M2: Like someone that's confident in what they're doing and likes working and is always like happy, not sad all the time you know.

F1: Always has a smiley face.

I: **Aha.**

F1: Yeah, is always happy.

M3: Like someone that's happy or doesn't shout out, gets on with their work.

M4: They're just polite.

M2: And people who just get on with it and then...

F1: They don't fight outside.

M1: ...are not naughty.

I: **Okay. What's a good student for you? What does it mean to be a good student?**

M2: Well be a good friend; be good at your work.

F1: Good at everything.

M2: Don't be naughty.

F1: Try and do your hardest.

M3: Yeah, do your hardest and be confident that you might learn something new.

M2: Just like if someone's annoying you just walk away from it.

F1: If someone's come over helping.

M4: And then help people who...

M3: People who don't shout out and help those people that are hurt...

I: Aha.

M2: ...and look after other people.

I: So it's not only about academic performance, about being a good student, it's other things as well.

F1: It's like good to have a joke but don't go too far, like Reece Jones, he goes too far.

I: How do you mean?

F1: Like, say he like told a funny joke, he'll just go one step too far.

M4: And sometimes he'll go a bit rude in jokes and everything and everyone starts laughing but some people, they just stop and like...

F1: They take it too far like...so if there was something funny happening and then it stopped happening...everyone was laughing when it was happening but then it stopped, like some people would carry on like for quite a long time so they just get told off because like they took it a bit too far.

M2: And they do...when it stops they just carry on.

I: How do you feel when something like this happens in the classroom?

M3: Well we laugh for a bit.

F1: What do you mean?

I: I mean like you were saying he's going too far sometimes.

M3: Like people think like they join in after them. When they go too far they just laugh with them and stuff.

F1: Yeah, like say like...

M4: They can't help laughing.

F1: ...they did it for a joke and they were just lying on the floor...

M3: ...make you laugh, that's why it's important to Kent. So like...

F1: Say the teacher did something like...did a joke about Kent, he would probably like go one step too far like 'oooh' or something and he doesn't mean to.

M4: We were doing drama and we were doing a play about sausages and he would just take it too far, screaming 'sausages'.

F1: And he'll go 'sausages, sausages'.

(Unclear. Children talking over each other 00:03:57)

M4: ...'where are the sausages, where are the sausages' and then everyone started laughing and everything.

I: **Alright.**

M3: And then he starts laughing.

M2: Probably some...nearly everyone sometimes like if they can't do their work.

M4: Mr does help you...also that you get it. I've had it before like he gives us work that sometimes we can't understand and he comes along and helps us so...but we can't understand it so...

M2: M had a maths thing and neither of us could understand what he meant and he just came over and helped us a bit.

M4: He doesn't talk much, he just keeps quiet when...

F1: And like it's an easy question probably sometimes.

M3: If Mr J says 'what are you doing?' they're probably daydreaming or something and not listening and...

F1: They're not concentrating.

M4: ...they're just not concentrating because the first question if they don't know it they just don't concentrate and they just sit there and then they don't tell Mr J they don't get it, they just don't get it.

M2: They don't tell them they don't get it. M does sometimes and when M here he just sits there looking confused, like a confused face.

F1: Yeah.

M2: Well he doesn't come to ordinary class...

F1: He comes here.

M2: ...with some people that are younger than him and they do some easier work.

(Unclear. Children talking over each other 00:06:22)

F1: ...he has special help.

M2: Like work here and like help...

M3: With his work.

F1: ...like special help and he does some quite easy work like Year 1 or 2's would do.

M2: No, they give him like...I think Harris's like a year below us, like he's on Year 4 work. I think they're trying to make him more confident and try and boost him up to Year 5 work.

M3: Yeah, so if he's in Year 6, if he completed the Year 4 work he'd probably...

F1: Go to Year 5.

M4: ...might go to Year 5.

I: **He gets help for the subjects outside the classroom, I mean literacy, numeracy and other...science.**

M4: Yeah, sometimes he comes in our class but sometimes he goes out here. So if we're doing something like art he comes with us.

M3: He does PE with us and everything, stuff like that.

F1: It's just like...

M2: It's literacy and science.

M1: But he does topic work. It's like.

M2: He does art with us.

F1: Like painting.

M3: It's only literacy, maths and science he does here.

I: **I see.**

M3: Stuff you can't learn anywhere else, like PE, you can't learn at this table and you can do some science but not much topic because other people might be going to do science or literacy.

I: **What do you like most when you work in your classroom? What do you like the most?**

M4: Art, I like art.

F1: ...art and the crafty stuff.

I: **Why do you like Art?**

F1: Because it's not work and it's fun and you get to talk after.

M3: It is work but it's fun.

M4: Because it isn't a lesson you have to think about, it's just free to do like what you want and thinking...

M3: Yeah because if you like painting that's what you're doing.

F1: And drawing.

M3: If you like drawing you do art.

F1: I like PE and art. PE is like...

I: **Physical education.**

F1: ...even...

I: **The physical education.**

M3: ...even art they tell us what to do and everything but it's still fun. They don't give us anything boring to do in art. It's fun, it's always a laugh and PE.

F1: So is PE.

M3: It's just the same but we're not doing art but we're having fun...

F1: Because sometimes we get to make up our own games.

M2: PE you do like exercise but not much.

F1: And you do some sports activities.

M2: Yeah.

M1: Like we make some games up so like we split into teams and like we play the games that is made up.

F1: We had a professional cricket player come in.

M2: Yeah.

F1: And he played with us, which was good, like for an hour and a half.

M3: Because nearly all of us in our class likes rounders and...

F1: ...cricket and stuff like bowls.

M3: ...but mainly rounders and..

F1: Football.

M4: ...we sometimes get football.

M3: The main sports is like cricket, basketball, rounders and football.

F1: No, cricket.

M4: Football's probably the main one because all of the Muggers...

M3: ...everyone plays it.

M2: ...there's two pitches, one for football and the top one's for everyone.

M3: Sometimes we can play the whole pitch when no-one's on it. Like in football it takes the whole space up, in Muggers.

M2: But the teachers...some people do complain a lot even if you're not doing anything.

F1: Because it's not fair for us if we don't play...

M3: Yeah but you've got the whole field.

F1: Like for basketball there's no net either.

M3: There is but no-one plays basketball.

M1: So when we came out, we came out late and no-one was on the Muggers so we played football on it.

F1: Well sometimes...

I: That's good.

M1: It's because a boy called Jacob and Jacob started like a club for the little ones in Year 2 for football and a few weeks ago me and (unclear name 00:17:58) and William and probably Connor made loads of matches and we made...the bottom pitch we used... we got two of those little pop up nets and we played football with the Year 2's.

I: Good. You said something before about art, that you are told what to do in the art class. Could you please explain to me what you meant? You say you are told what to do and you're not doing...

F1: We get told 'draw this picture as neat as you can but you can draw some stuff that you want to draw on it', like we do that and we post it on the wall and stick them to the wall and it was fun because like we didn't do exactly the same, we get to like add extra stuff on it. So that's why I don't think art's boring.

M1: Yeah because like if he says 'draw a picture' and he might...

F1: Anything.

M1: ...if someone says draw a picture of anything you want but like you've got to shade it in so like there's some things you've got to and some things you can do whatever you want. Like you can draw the picture by yourself but you've got to shade it in in pencil and stuff like that.

I: Okay. So do you follow some guidelines?

M2: Yeah, some, yeah.

M3: Or he just says 'go and paint the picture of your favorite thing' and we go off and paint something.

F1: Yeah like stuff like...he'll say what we have to do but one thing we do ourselves.

M2: Like make a front of an album for this...

F1: That's when he said we had to do everything and we just...

M2: ...make it look like anything you want he said.

I: Do you like working in pairs or individually?

F1: Pairs.

M2: Pairs.

M1: Pairs.

M3: Because you get to be with your friend as well.

F1: Because if you don't get it they help you.

M2: Your friends are there to help you.

F1: And have a little chat.

M2: You might have some of your friends and the person, some of their friends that's quite clever to help you. I usually do things like that.

M3: And you sit on the table with your friend as well because he says 'sit where you want in pairs'.

M4: And we get like some girls and some boys in one group.

F1: It has to be at least a group of five or four.

M1: Yeah, three girls and two boys or...

I: **I see. Okay. Now, how do you choose your friends in the classroom? How do you choose your friends? Based on what?**

M2: Because you like them.

M1: If they play the same sport.

M3: Like same personality. Like they like football but they like girl's stuff as well.

M2: If they respect you.

M4: I'm a tomboy and if it's a girl, she likes football, I like football but she likes like pinky stuff and I don't...

M3: I don't, I like purple stuff.

F1: ...yeah and she likes girly girly stuff, like skirts and stuff...

M3: No I don't, I hate skirts.

M4: Oh, sorry. She likes wearing more stuff than me like girly, like tops. I like wearing football t-shirts.

F1: Like smart stuff.

I: **But you have common interests sometimes**

M4: Like someone who respects you and stuff like that.

F1: And helps you when you're stuck or if you're outside and you've hurt yourself, you've fallen over, they'll probably come over and help you.

M3: Because there's this really popular girl called Laura in our class and she's quite clever, the cleverest in the class or something, cleverest girl, and...

M2: Didn't you used to say you were?

M3: ...cleverest girl in the class and everyone wants to go with her now because she's like popular and she's just really kind.

F1: She sits next to me.

I: **Alright. When you say that someone had a good personality what do you mean?**

F1: Polite. Like if they're nice or if they're mean and like they're nice but they don't have really perfect...they're not really perfect, like in between, not really mean, not really, really nice.

I: I see, okay. Alright

F1: Any more questions I forgot?

I: Do you choose the person you sit with in the classroom?

F1: Yeah.

M3: No. Like we can when he says 'you can sit anywhere you want' but he or she picks the morning places and (unclear 00:23:54 – children talking over each other) and stuff like that.

M2: Because all the time he wants us to sit with some people that will help, that are intelligent, so he puts like the clever people with the not so clever people so...

F1: They're probably the people you're not going to actually work with but...

M2: And now he's putting like...two girls will probably talk to each other so he's trying to put a girl next to a boy and everything.

M3: Yeah but you change that.

M4: Yeah.

F1: Yeah I'm sitting next to one of my friends and she's sitting next to one of her friends, Laura, and I'm sitting next to Josh.

I: Alright.

F1: What was I going to say?

M2: And if you're like...say like I'm with Laura and then like George and we talk, we won't get on with our work. We do our work but we're like friends and we still laugh.

M3: It's good to get like separate from each other so you don't get told off.

I: I see. What kind of games do you play on the playground? You told me that most of you like football, right?

F1: Just walk round talking, like natter, or me and Laura just lie on the table stabbing each other.

M2: Football all the time, football.

M4: Or just chilling.

F1: Or we just talk and play...

(Unclear. Children talking over each other 00:27:57)

M4: We sometimes play with them, we sometimes play football but we mainly play football.

F1: When it's like hot and breezy, like it's not too hot and it's not too cold we just play football and when it's too hot we'll play a bit and then we'll go and chill in the shade and Rachel will

probably play with her friends but we'll, all the boys, like chilling, like pouring water. Yeah, get water bottles and put some water over us.

I: **What do you play with and why?**

M3: Football because I like it.

F1: I don't play much, I just walk around talking because I like talking and once (unclear 00:28:49) and it's probably talking about two hours about stuff.

M2: Football because I want to get better at it because I'm alright at it but I want to get a bit better.

M4: I like football because I like going to a football team and I want to improve my football and I like enjoy it.

I: **And you play with everybody, yeah?**

M2: Sometimes we play with the Year 3s and 4s but it's only...because sometimes we do Year 5 and 6 against 3s and 4s.

F1: And I bet you thrash them.

M2: Yeah we do.

M3: And we normally thrash them.

F1: Because they want to win they don't want to leave.

M2: You don't play, how would you know?

F1: Yeah but they do want to win because they don't want to feel like they're better than you, they want to be the best.

M3: They always want to win so they cheat so they can try and...

F1: ...they want to be the best and always win instead of always losing.

M3: I don't suppose you've heard of Maradonna but he punched it into the net and they do that and they say they get away with it.

M2: And they said it was a goal.

M4: They counted it as a goal.

F1: Pretend you're heading but don't punch.

M3: We just pick the ball up and run over to the net when they do it.

M4: Yeah, we just get the ball and just run across the pitch.

(Unclear. Children talking over each other 00:30:15)

M3: It's like rugby, everyone's rugby tackling me, diving on top of me.

M4: Mostly I pick the ball up, because it was hand ball, and so I put my legs out and they were diving on my head and that. Someone dived onto my head.

F1: It's mean and horrible.

M3: I was like on a pile on at about there from the ground.

F1: Pile ons are good.

APPENDIX F: TAPE-RECORDED CONVERSATION

1. Transcription of conversation of Sam and his classmates in Art Lesson, Panoptical Heights, year 4/5. An example

B: Bally/ D: Dina / S: Sam/ L: Lucia/ T: Teacher

B: Or five million.

D: Or five.

B: Five million.

S: Just help me.

B: You haven't done anything Sam.

S: I haven't done anything.

B: Why?

S: What why are you having that?

B: There's loads out there.

T: No we're not doing it in threes. Wash that afterwards. So you go and get some paper towels and wash that.

S: Did that part, that part and that part while you were away.

D: You put it there for me. Ok?

L: What's the problem? Is that your string? Is it yours?

M: Are we doing another one?

D: That's a big ball.

S: Are we doing another piece of string round it?

B: Woosh, woosh.

D: No you do it.

S: Right.
Just stop it will you?

B: I can't move Sam.

S: I've done enough work. I need a break.

B: But you've hardly done any work.

S: Have you seen me?

B: Same as Dina, same as Lucia.

S: I have done work and it's me

B: I've done work as well.

D: And Lucia's doing a little bit of work now.

S: What at the table?

B: Oh my god why is she dancing?

L: I've done some work.

D: You're dancing crazy.

S: Dina, you don't know what crazy is because I'm crazy.

B: No you're not crazy Sam.

S: Yeah I am.

B: Yeah he is.

S: I know what crazy is, I am crazy.

B: Yeah he is crazy.

S: No I'm weird.

D: I know what crazy and weird is.

B: Weird means you're just.... crazy means the same thing.

T: Make sure you put plenty of glue on those in case they fall off.

Sam: Mr Cas are we allowed a bit more string?

Bally: Nice string.

Sam: It's all the same.

Dina: Simon.

Lucia: Well what?

Dina: Shhhhhhhh.

Bally: Sam, Sam?

Sam: I've got some more.

Bally: E, me, P.

Sam: You like? Nine years old, honestly.

Dina: Yeah, I like piglet.

Bally: You baby.

Dina: I'm not a baby.

Sam: Baby.

Bally: I bet in your family you're the baby.

Bally: Why haven't you glued this here?

Dina: And my sister likes him.

Bally: Shut up, shut up.

Sam: I know why don't we just stick every piece of string on.

Bally: You are not a baby.

Sam: Come here.

Dina: Yeah.

Bally: I'm telling. Mr Cas, Mr Cas, Sam is flicking string all over the place.

Sam: He's got a partner like yours. Like I with Mary, not your partner.

Bally: Yeah but he's flicking it at Mary.

Sam: None of your concern.

Bally: No.

Sam: Dina you've wet the paper!

Dina: Sorry.

Bally: Just ignore it.

Dina: B****y h**l.

Bally: Just ignore it.

Lucia: That's enough, wet the paper. I don't want it any more wetted.

Sam: Said b****y h**l.

Lucia: Bally, Dina's wet the paper.

Bally: Yeah well this time I didn't say anything back because I saw you, didn't say anything back to you.

Dina: Sorry? Can you what? Well it depends what Bally thinks of it, doesn't it?

Bally: I wouldn't...

Sam: Not liking those strings to me.

Bally: Baby... I believe you're a baby.

Dina: Oh b****y h**k.

Sam: What have you done?

Lucia: Dina's wet the table, she's wet the piece of paper, she's wet me now.

Sam: Dina!

Bally: You've wet Lucia; she's going to get mad.

Sam: I believe I can fly [singing]

Bally: It's Sam...

Sam: I believe I can touch the sky [singing]

T: Right you just sit where you are for the moment. Fold your arms and look this way. Right some of you, not all of you and I wouldn't expect all of you, don't think oh no they've finished we'd better finish now. That is not what I'm saying, you've got another half an hour yet. If you want to spend that half an hour putting more string on, getting more swirls that is your prerogative.

Lucia: Do you want to put more string on?

T: That is entirely up to you, right? If you have finished, what I'm going to ask you to do is to put your work over on the floor where it was before and then I'm going to give you some sheets of orange or a sheet of this orange. Now the idea what on your picture this orange is going to be? Simon?

Sam: Are we going to cut it out in a crescent moon shape?

T: You are going to make your crescent moon shape, exactly, ok? You are going to decide how big you want it. Notice it is a crescent moon. We talked about this yesterday didn't we? Ok, you then stick it on. Then I'm going to get some wax crayons out and if you want to start then looking at your yellow and your stars alright, you can put those on afterwards, ok?

Lucia: I think we should keep on going because look how thick it is on there.

Bally: At least three more layers, at least four.

Sam: Right I'm going to get some more string E, ok?
That's better.

APPENDIX G: ETHICAL DOCUMENTS

1. Brief statement of research aims and proposed methods of data generation of project

2. Teacher information sheet

3. Parent/Guardian information sheet

4. Teacher consent form

5. Parent/Guardian consent form

THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

ETHICS AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Brief statement of research aims and proposed methods of data generation of project

Researcher: Effie Efthymiou

School of Education

Title of Project: School Culture as a Factor Affecting Communication in Children With and Without Special Educational Needs in Two UK Primary Schools.

I would like to conduct a qualitative study in which I will compare two primary schools in England. The purpose of my research is to explore the talk that students develop in the classroom when they communicate with their peers with special educational needs.

In order to explore students' talk in the classroom and their perceptions of students with special educational needs, I would like to use ethnographic field notes, videotaped observations in the classroom, audio taped interviews with groups of students and audio taped interviews with teachers. Moreover, the analysis of formal school documents will help me understand the organisational and policy background.

For the proposed methods of data generation, I will strictly adhere to the ethical guidelines of British Educational Research Association (2004).

I confirm that to the best of my knowledge, I have made known all information relevant to The Ethics and Research Committee and I undertake to inform The Committee of any such information, which subsequently becomes available whether before or after the research has begun.

Signed_____ (Researcher) Date ____/____/2009

TEACHER INFORMATION SHEET

Title of Project: School Culture as a Factor Affecting Communication in Children With and Without Special Educational Needs in Two UK Primary Schools

Researcher: Effie Efthymiou
Project Supervisor:

Purpose of study
I wish to conduct a study about students' talk with their peers with special educational needs in the classroom.

Procedure
I would like to include your students in the study by recording conversations in the classroom using audio and video recordings. I would also like to invite you to a short interview with me, which will be audio recorded.

Confidentiality
I will protect your names and all data will be confidential.

Request for more information
Please feel free to ask me any questions at any time.

Refusal or withdrawal
You may refuse to participate in this study and you will be free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Contact details

Researcher: Effie Efthymiou	Tel.:	Email:
Supervisor:	Tel.:	Email:
Supervisor:	Tel.:	Email:
School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator		Email:

TEACHER CONSENT FORM

Project title: School Culture as a Factor Affecting Communication in Children With and Without Special Educational Needs in Two UK Primary Schools.

Researcher's name: Effie Efthymiou

Supervisor's name:

- I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part.
- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.
- I understand that I may withdraw from the research project at any stage and that this will not affect my status now or in the future.
- I understand that I will not be identified and my personal results will remain confidential.
- I understand that I will be audio taped during the interview and videotaped during the observations.
- I understand that all data will be kept in a safe and secure location and only the researcher will have access to them.
- I understand that I may contact the researcher or supervisor if I require further information about the research, and that I may contact the Research Ethics Coordinator of the School of Education, University of Nottingham, if I wish to make a complaint relating to my involvement in the research.

Signed _____

Print name _____ **Date** ___/___/2009

Contact details

Researcher: Effie Efthymiou	Tel.:	Email:
Supervisor:	Tel.:	Email:
Supervisor:	Tel.:	Email:

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION SHEET

Title of Project: School Culture as a Factor Affecting Communication in Children With and Without Special Educational Needs in Two UK Primary Schools

Researcher: Effie Efthymiou
Project Supervisor:

Purpose of study
This study seeks to find a way to explore the culture of the school and the ways it influences the communication among students in the classroom and on playground. You child's participation in audio-recorded interviews and video-recorded observations will help me to find out about their experiences of sharing learning tasks with other children and talking to each other while they work or play together at school. School results will be used to determine whether effective ways of teaching and learning can improve students' communication.

Privacy Protected
I will protect your child's name and all data will be kept confidential. The school will be given a fictitious name in the report to ensure the privacy of all participants.

Request for more information
Please feel free to ask me any questions you may have at any time.

Refusal or withdrawal
You may refuse your child to participate in this study and will be free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Contact Information
This study is part of my doctoral dissertation study at The University of Nottingham, Department of Education. All information at school will be collected by:

Effie Efthymiou (doctoral student)
Tel.: Email:

If you need to contact my supervisors or the Education Research Ethics Coordinator, please use the following information:

Supervisor: Tel.: Email:
Supervisor: Tel.: Email:
School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator Email:

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

Project title: School Culture as a Factor Affecting Communication in Children With and Without Special Educational Needs in Two UK Primary Schools.

Researcher's name: Effie Efthymiou

Supervisor's name:

- I understand the Participant Information Sheet and the purpose of the study. I allow my child to participate in the study.
- I understand that my child may withdraw from the research project at any stage.
- I understand that my child will not be identified and the personal results will remain confidential.
- I understand that my child will be audio taped during the interview and videotaped during the observations in the classroom.
- I understand that all data will be kept in a safe and secure location and only the researcher will have access to them.
- I understand that I may contact the researcher or supervisor if I require further information about the research.

Signed _____

Print name _____ **Date** ___/___/2009

Contact details

Researcher: Effie Efthymiou	Tel.:	Email:
Supervisor:	Tel.:	Email:
Supervisor:	Tel.:	Email:
School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator		Email: